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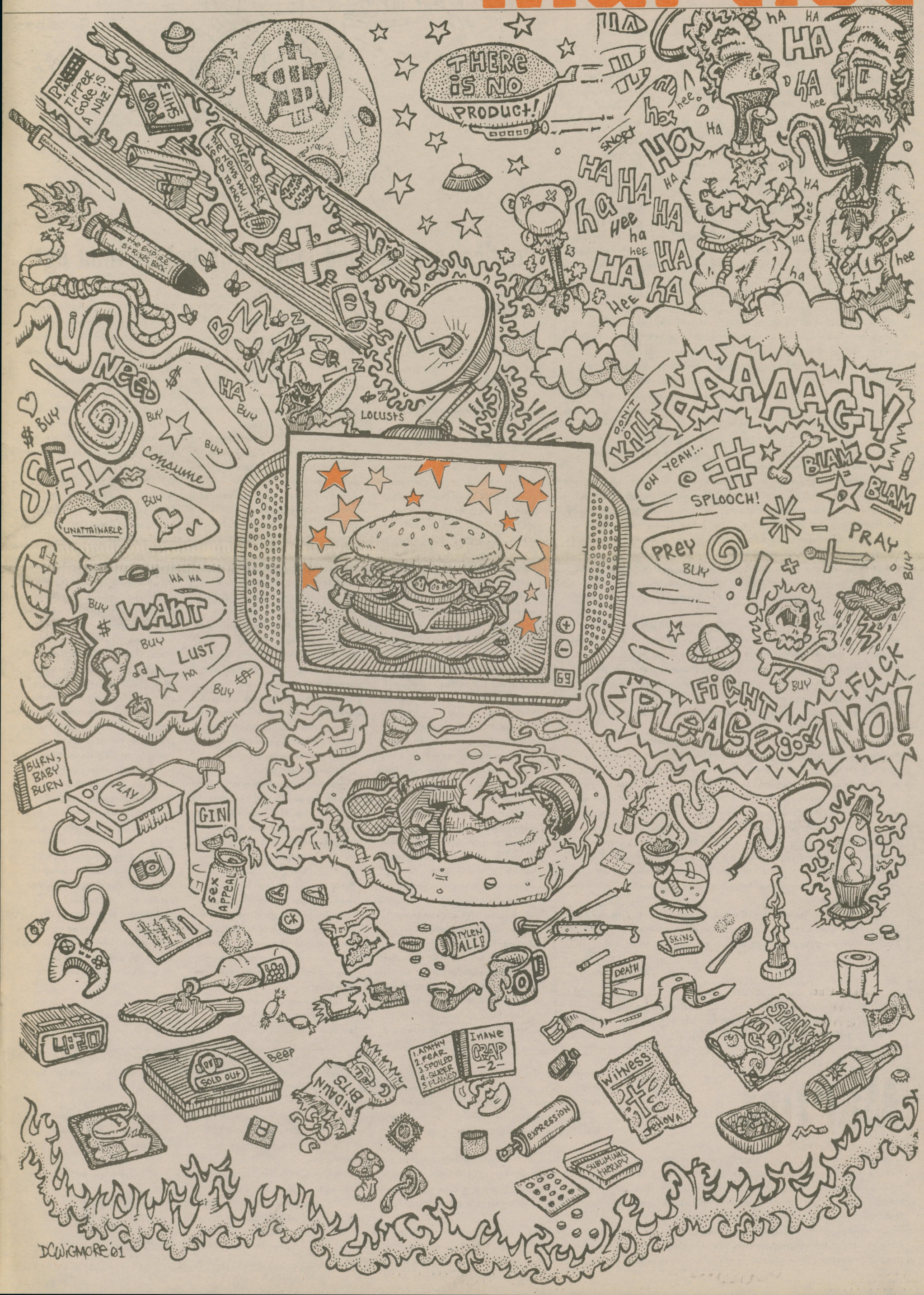
APRIL 12, 2001 [53.30]

Martlet


THERE IS NO PRODUCT!
HA HA HA
HA HA HA
HA HA HA

EDITORIAL:

Binding eros with academia

Eight years ago I called it existential angst: serving frothy cappucinos in funky cafés, drinking red wine on saggy single beds in tiny smoke-filled apartments, getting pregnancy tests, pressing beer glass to tap, stepping out, shutting up, coping, quitting, living in trailer parks and thumbing my way down the frying-pan hot highways of the Okanagan valley in my overalls and my flip-flops. I wondered and puzzled and marveled and giggled and worried and rejoiced and raged at the many faces, spaces, stories, tragedies and glories of the world in which I was wandering.

It was experiential learning, a visceral journey, and I took in my life like I used to drink beer: in large quantities and huge gulps, with little regard for quality or cost. This was the learning of randomly Do-ing; I asked, I searched, I walked. I would talk to, or listen, to just about anybody. I actually cared. It was worth it.

visceral: 1. of, pertaining to, or affecting the viscera.
2. arising from deep feeling, intuition, etc.

viscera: 1. the internal organs, especially those of the great cavities of the body, as the stomach, lungs, heart, intestines, etc.

But there was something missing here, too. Passion for living, kind core values and buckets of good intentions were producing lots of hospitality jobs and good roommates and cheesy poetry and dates, but not many answers to the Whys of it all. So I came to School. First, I tried to learn how to write. But talk of objectivity in journalism classes left me cold. So then, I tried to learn how to Think. Both endeavours brought some mild success.

intellect: 1. the power of the mind to grasp ideas and relations, and to exercise dispassionate reason and rational judgment; reason; understanding.

Wow. I learned some Big Words. The ability of many academics to string them all together struck me as a whole new sort of sport. However, what some radical scholars were saying amazed me and I was hooked. Sodden with theories and concepts and critiques, my vocabulary sprung up like a freshly-fertilized garden. Suddenly, my world was rife with paradigms and politics and identities, 'the gaze' was 'othering', capitalism was exploiting, the personal was political, categories were mutable and postmodernism was shaking it all down. I was blown away in the best of ways. The emperor has no clothes, I cried, with a shock of pure joy. There was so much deconstructing going on in my life, I could hardly find a pair of socks, let alone something to believe in. School was a strange bird. I hated computers, but liked the writing. I loved the thinking, but missed the feeling.

My keyboard was grubby and my guitar strings were cold; my ideas felt fresh and my body felt old; I'd had my ass on too many chairs and not enough hilltops and faces and bicycle seats. Academia had a cost, and it was this: an ashen complexion, fun deprivation, coffee addiction, a lack of good fiction, hours of lost sleep and a deep, relentless restlessness. Each April, I embraced with unabashed joy the basic rigour of serving tables. Aaah, the sweet freedom of a staccato stream of menial tasks. The pace is fast – a busy waitress must live in the Now or she stresses and sinks. It was like decompression, a kind of hyper-engaged meditation. Each summer of serving tables, stripping into lakes and not much else, kept me sane, made me whole, brought me back to myself.

But school haunted me here too, in my Time Off, my Life Apart. Theories whispered and resurfaced, raised their chatty little heads. When we didn't get coffee breaks, when that guy spoke to me like that, when they fought the union, when I turned before the mirror; at museums, at movies, with loud uncle Louis; the familiar looked different. All around me: slight tilts, strange angles, new questions, fresh hues. What's a girl, I mean, woman, to do?

knowledge: 1. a result or product of knowing; information or understanding acquired through experience; practical ability, or skill.

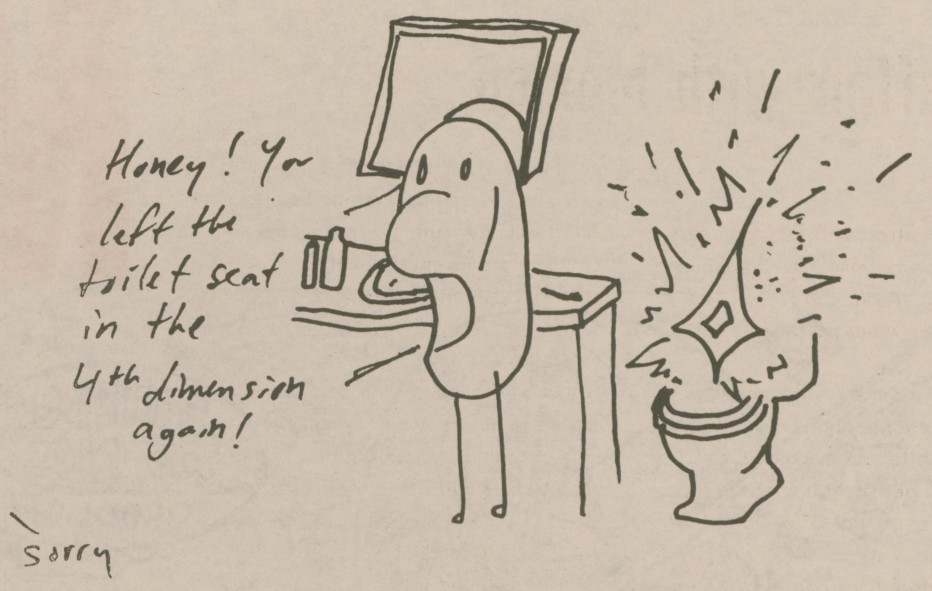
And, of course, by the end of the summer I'd be over-worked and understimulated, ready to lay down my tray and flex and jostle my brain. But as time passed, in the thin grey light of an afternoon class, I would look at the four walls and the desks, books, notepads, and ask: but how does this explain me liking that jerk at the station, and that job I can deconstruct keeps me so sane, and that red skirt and that sad girl and the boredom of meetings, and that born-again banjo player and that abrasiveness of 'well-meaning'. And what about art, that keeps me believing? If I'm not singing, what do I care about Meaning?

passion: 1. any intense, extreme, or over-powering emotion of feeling. 6. a strong desire or affection for some object, cause, etc. 8. formerly in philosophy and psychology, the state or condition of being acted upon. (from the latin passio, -onis suffering, pati, to suffer)

Eight years ago I called it 'existential angst'. But that is all behind me now. I am too busy to worry when I have papers due, and by the time summer gets here I barely have the energy to give a flying anything about much at all: do you?

by Carrie Ann Taylor

Editorial topics are decided on by staff at editorial meetings, every Monday at noon in SUB B011. Editorials are written by one or more staff members, and are not necessarily the opinion of all staff.



Goombas

Common domestic disputes of the future

Political protest and magic mix better than ego

by Gillian Jerome

"I find, after all these years, I am a believer –
I believe what the thunder and lightning have to say;
I believe that dreams are real, and that death has two reprisals;
I believe that dead leaves and black water fill my heart."
- from *Ars Poetica*, Charles Wright

The world was a collection of toys soaked in olive oil the morning I walked from my downtown apartment to the James Bay Commuity Centre for Starhawk's workshop on magic and activism. Tourists milled about in their leisure wear preparing to buy the stupid shit they buy. A guy slumped against Mme. Tussaud's London Wax Museum asked if he could read my fortune. I told him no, I didn't want the news, good or bad. As I skulked along the sidewalk past the Legislature, two crows squawked from inside the thick head of a Japanese Maple. The world felt both easy and alive.

I arrived at the centre as a group of women were setting up the gymnasium for the workshop. Not feeling much like feeling useless, I pitched in with the day's orders to set up 200 chairs. After ten or so, Starhawk arrived, an ordinary woman in jeans and a cotton sweater with frizzy grey hair and olive skin. In fact, I had no idea that the famous political activist, author and worker of magic had just entered the room, except for the fact that one volunteer called her Star and asked for her help setting up a drawing board. Nobody flinched. So I kept working.

I'm not a big believer in groups. I avoid protests because I can't stand the rote chanting. After a couple of years of visceral activism in Montreal, I got tired of losing my own convictions to the power of the few who shout the loudest.

I walked away from the first day of the workshop feeling gutted. We spent more energy than I had simulating hassle lines between protestors and protestors, citizens and protestors, protestors and police. It was dramatic; it was draining. We simulated a direct-action street protest based on the false but not improbable threat of a Walmart moving into the hood. Each affinity group who had banded and worked together through out the morning performed the roles of police, instigators, citizens, and protestors with various tactics.

Although I thought the simulation was pretty hopeless, the post-protest dialogue was interesting. A large woman with willowy grey hair spoke up. She introduced herself as a person who had been active in various political movements for over 30 years. For the purposes of the faux-protest, she was a member of the anarchist group who threw chairs into a pile. She told the young activist who jumped in the pit of fire shouting "Love, love, love," that in real-life she probably would have pummeled her, with her energy and rage thrumming as loudly as it was.

Ten points for that woman. My ire had been mounting all day. Although I was learning a lot, I'm a firm believer in the fact that human beings have an edge, a fiery will for anger, rage and hatred, and the more they try to suppress that, the weirder they get. Peace and love is an illusory goal for humanity without welcoming the dark side.

However, my small space in the world took nothing away from the 199 other people who looked as if they were having a grand ol' time, except the guy from Saltspring whose wife dragged him along. He left after the good karma session when our affinity group sat in a circle, closed our eyes and came up with a series of images to represent our ideal world. The positive affirmation exercise was the clincher for him. We had to say our name and each person in the group sent positive magic to that person while the group echoed their name in unison. He left just after that.

The older women who took part in the weekend taught me much about my relationship to the fucked-up world we live in. The same hard-hitting realist spoke up again on Sunday and said that political work against the nuclear threat in the 80s burned her and her friends to bits. It was about sitting around and trying to put forth the best idea, she said. It was all about ego and it hurt. I don't know if I'll ever be able to shift violent energy in a direct action line using my new-found skills. But I know now how to ground myself and clarify my intention before going out *en masse* to fight the fight. The idea that magic, energy, karma et cetera can influence the outcome of a large-scale protest such as the one about to happen in Quebec City isn't so absurd to me any more.

The workshop closed with what is called a grief circle. All 200 of us went outside into the sun and formed a circle on the lawn. Starhawk placed a large bowl of water in the middle with a small bowl of sea salt beside it. She explained that we were going to follow a particular Wiccan tradition. Each person had the chance to throw salt into the water, offering up their own particular grief either by calling it out into the wind and saying it silently to themselves. As people in the outside circle moved in to make an offering, concentric circles formed. Some people lay on the grass and heaved their tears out while others came to lay a hand on their back. I was a bit antsy at first. But as the drumming continued and people yelped and howled their grief above the humming – everything from losing a child, to living in jail after protest arrests to living with chronic pain – I was struck with the power of a group of people who were ready to allign their passion with their suffering.

Afterward, people chatted and laughed and carried on. I imagined a grief circle with bankers, politicians and world trade leaders. We'd need a bigger bowl, I thought, and more sea salt.

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UVIC'S STUDENT PAPER

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Letters must be typewritten, submitted on disk or by e-mail and include your name and student number for verification. Letters must be 200 words maximum.

Deadline for letters is noon on the Friday before publication date. Letters will be prioritized by order received. Letters with pseudonyms or group names will not be printed.

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My love affair with Mexico...

by Cynthia Connell

Saint Christopher is the patron saint of travel. It is only fitting that after years of traveling – hitchhiking with truckers in Australia, trekking in Nepal, and scuba diving in Fiji – that I would choose to settle in a town named after him.

San Cristobal de las Casas is a colonial town nestled 2,000 metres up in the highlands of Chiapas, the most southeastern state in Mexico.

Three blocks from my house, sitting at the top of the steps in front of the church of Guadalupe, who is Mexico's patron saint, one can see the entire city. A sprawl of low-rise cement houses painted lime green and Pepto-Bismol pink stretch out to the foot of the hills that encircle the city. Taxis honk behind donkeys loaded with bundles of wood; the water trucks sing out a tape recorded "agua poo-ree-fee-cada" and the gas trucks drag metal rings on chains along the cobblestone streets to announce their arrival in the neighbourhood.

Part of the reason I left Canada was to get away from consumerism, but here in Mexico I find myself retreating to it, however briefly. I grew up with fast food and movies in English; that will never change.

Then when the rains go the cold comes. Laundry, stiff on the line at dawn, thaws out by mid-morning and is toasted dry by late afternoon when the temperatures fall again. The boiler that heats water for showers demands five pesos of wood and every single blanket we bought at the fair last year is piled on the bed along with a quilt from Guatemala.

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The road out of town snakes up to Tzotzil-speaking indigenous villages. Barefoot women carrying baskets on their heads and babies on their backs amble through the early morning fog on the way to the market. A busload of tourists passes them, a lone video camera hanging out the window.

My place here in Mexico lies somewhere between the two. I speak Spanish, earn pesos and take the *colectivo* to work just like anyone else. Everyone in the post office knows me and my dog by name. I don't need ID to rent movies at Videolandia anymore, but I still get offered Zapatista dolls and amber walking through the center of town. I get overcharged for vegetables in the market at least once a month. The distinction between "us, the Mexicans" and "you, the foreigners" can be hard to live with.

Mexicans are very nationalistic; every second tv commercial is for a product or store that is *muy Mexicana* (very Mexican). One of the favorite expressions is *aqui en Mexico* (here in Mexico) followed by an explanation of some incomparable tradition, music, food or holiday that originates here.

I will always be a foreigner; I accept it. As foreigners, we have our own community. Every couple of months we go to Tuxtla Gutierrez, the capital of Chiapas, and the closest big city. Here in the sticky, humid climate that comes to mind when you think of Mexico, we take comfort in the familiar. We visit McDonald's or KFC, then stop at Sam's Club to stock up on chocolate chips (Sam's is the only place in Mexico that they are available) and Kraft Dinner.

Part of the reason I left Canada was to get away from consumerism, but here in Mexico I find myself retreating to it, however briefly. I grew up with fast food and movies in English; that will never change.

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I worked for a year as a tour leader before I resigned myself to teaching English. All of my trips started in Cancun and I would spend the day in the mall before I went to meet my group. Chinese food at the food fair and a couple of hours in the record store served as an opportunity to relax before three weeks of 24-hour-a-day responsibility for twelve people, mostly Europeans, who had never been to Latin America before. We traveled "adventure" style, which meant public transportation through Mexico, Guatemala and Belize. This Christmas I spent five hours on a "chicken bus" in Guatemala with one arm in the air to fend off the bundles of wilted poinsettas that threatened to fall on the head of one of my sleeping charges coming out of every curve. There were some great groups and some nightmare trips where everything from the weather to the prices of food was my fault. It was easier to relate to the locals than my tourists; Mexico was a holiday for them, for me it was home and the two ways of thinking are very different.

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Life here is simple. I am surrounded by culture in all forms: people know not to take themselves too seriously; they smile; nobody has change and it's not that important; every month has at least one national holiday; and every neighborhood has a patron saint; which is always cause for celebration. Yesterday I went to get a key copied at the *cerrajeria*, which was in a sectioned off portion of someone's living room.

"En que puedo sevirle?" (in what can I serve you?) the woman asked when she finally emerged from behind the curtain.

"Could I get a copy of this?" I handed her my key.

"One moment. Let me see." She turned it over between her fingers, eyeing it curiously and her head disappeared between the part in the curtains.

"Don Alberto... are you there? Don Alberto?... Pepe, where is Don Alberto?"

She reappeared and tilted her head towards the back room, "Un momentito, por favor."

I waited. A rooster crowed from the back and a static radio salsa mixed with the television news. There was no sign of Don Alberto.

"Ma." A voice, which I assumed belonged to Pepe, sounded above it all and the woman's head disappeared again.

"Esta Don Alberto?"

"He is sleeping."

She turned back towards me and handed me the key. " I'm sorry, there is no one who knows how to cut keys here. Maybe if you come back later."

I thanked her and wondered what the purpose of the "cerrajeria" being open was if cutting keys was its sole function.

As I turned to leave she raised a finger, smiled a wide silver-toothed grin and pulled a large wicker basket from under the counter. "But if you'd like to buy some bread I have some, freshly baked today."

I nibbled on a warm roll and watched the sun set in swirls of pink and purple as I walked home.

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My love affair with Mexico began years ago, long before I ever climbed a Mayan ruin or ate a real taco or spoke a word of Spanish. It was a magical, mysterious place that I only knew from books. It was where criminals from "America's Most Wanted" hid and where lovers ran away to; real freedom lay south of the border. Life here isn't always easy, and as a foreigner there are obstacles to face, but as a traveler I believe that Saint Christopher has been with me all along and Mexico is where my heart is. My first trip on my own was to Mexico; I strayed and it called me back again, time after time. It wasn't until my fourth visit that I made the decision to stay, which was only natural; everything takes time here. *Mañana*, which means tomorrow, is one of the first words one learns upon arrival.

CAR SMASH

photo by Jason Gondziola

Car smash is a hit with the students: Engineering student Kory Eastman bashes a K-car to relieve some pre-exam stress.

Will the real Lloyd Axworthy please step up?

by Luglio S. Sandoval

Amid a room-full of university benefactors, Liberal supporters and a handful of representatives of local non-profits, the former Minister of External Affairs, the academic and now resident of the Cowichan Valley, Dr. Lloyd Axworthy, stood to defend his record as Canada's previous main policy-maker in international affairs.

Drawing from his experience of having guided the country throughout some of its most recent and controversial foreign policy years, Dr. Axworthy seemed unapologetic. His appearance, as part of the University of Victoria President's Distinguished Lectures, was the fourth of such public appearances by the newly appointed Director & CEO of the Liu Centre for the Study of Global Issues at the University of British Columbia. His lecture on Canada's role in the World Stage centred on Human Security, one of the projects currently headed by Axworthy at the UBC Centre.

The concept of Human Security is based on the notion that the protection of people is at least as important as the sovereignty of states. This constitutes a major shift in international relations and world affairs, which have long placed predominant emphasis on the security of the state. According to Axworthy, Canada's contribution has been to focus the concept of human security on protecting people from violence while establishing an international agenda to follow this objective.

Handling questions from the audience with refined diplomatic skills, he cited Canada's leadership role in successfully negotiating the international treaty banning the use of land mines in 1997. He conceded that Canada's lukewarm implementation of foreign policy is the result of difficulties in negotiating changes at the international level, particularly when dealing with trade issues and the interest-powerful countries such as the US. Dr. Joan Russow from the Global Compliance Research Project, challenged the speaker to justify "how Canada, while favouring trade and investment agreements, continues to ignore aspects of other international treaties that deal with matters of public trust such as the environment, labour, peace and social justice" "This concept of Human Security," added Dr. Russow, "does not measure up when we look at current military interventions by NATO which, as we all know, have resulted in human suffering."

While not explaining the obvious dissonance, Axworthy did call on the University to work to bridge the gap between academic knowledge and popular participation. A notion, that many young activists and non-governmental organizations, such as the United Nations Association of Canada (UNAC), have fostered for several years through popular education initiatives. Foreign policy isn't just for diplomats: non-governmental organizations, like the UNAC, serve as centres for information-based dialogue and community action. Popular, action-based education guides the work of many young activists in their struggle to reconcile their world-views with those of their political representatives.

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Notes for Quebec City: Reflections on Seattle

by Darren Alexander

This country's government is behind this, they're complicit, my friend says.

I know, I say.

Of course they're deep in the pockets of the corporate pigs, but sooner or later we have to bring our so-called elected representatives to task. It's come full circle. Chretien, the fucker... Not only are they promoting this charade and participating in it, he says, but they're providing the home and the security for it too. At taxpayers' expense even!

I know, I say.

What if someone gets hurt or killed out there? It's bound to happen. Think the Liberals would take responsibility for that? Given that they're the ones facilitating the whole damn thing? And to think we're actually paying for the privilege of being shot at, tear-gased and pepper-sprayed. All for wanting to be heard, for our elected representatives to listen to us. Makes me feel like I'm kicking my own ass.

I know, I know.

•••

He knows I know, because he's the one who's told it me several times before. But he's not talking to tell me anything so much as he's talking to reconfirm, for us both, the absurdity of the world of capital D democracy. Not absurdity, sorry. Inhumanity. He's corrected me before, for referring to atrocities and other consequences of criminal activities as merely absurd. As in, isn't it absurd that so many are so rich when so many others die for want of food or water? No, it's not absurd. It's criminal, it's sick, it's insane.

He's packing for Quebec, to join in the upcoming protest against the FTAA Summit. His funds are all but dried up, and furthermore he risks losing a decent work gig, a good opportunity that doesn't come along very often. But lack of funds or loss of work can't stop him. He's scratched around this planet on little or nothing before, he knows how to get by on fumes. And he's used to getting up and going even when the going's harder than staying put.

These days, though, it takes a greater toll on him. He's connected to earthly things now, unlike before. Not a house and car, but a woman, and a kid on the way. Some creative and political projects. He's begun to question where his duty lies, where his responsibilities rest. On top of it all, his friends and loved ones, those who he'd trust in a tight spot, would not be there to join him in Quebec.

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Six kilometres of fence laid out on concrete blocks to protect them, he continues. And 8,000 RCMP ready with tear gas, pepper spray and rubber bullets. Who knows what else?

Are you sure it's not eight kilometres of fence and 6,000 RCMP? I ask, determined to get his goat.

Whatever happened to our so-called civil liberties? Whatever happened to our right to peaceful protest? he asks rhetorically, chosing to ignore me.

We still have it, I offer. It's just that now we have to do it outside a big fence, supervised by a large detachment of RCMP.

At his best, when I like him most, he is easy-going and playful, calm and relaxed. Now he's anything but. He's edgy today. This is the way he always gets when there's a show approaching. That's what he calls them – the convergences, the sit-ins, the lockdowns, the monkey-wrenching, the culture-jamming, the protests, the street theatre, the rallies and parades – they're all shows. Sometimes it's local – at the legislature, outside a chain store, on the street or in an office. Other times it's a trip away, to a forest, or to a watershed, or another city. Sometimes in public view by daylight, other times under cover of night. He's driven by some internal scale of justice, a scale which, to the best of my understanding, is at once heartfelt and intellectual. When something tips it too far one way he is moved by it, moved to take action. I don't think he has a choice in it really. It's like he's possessed. When it comes right down to it, he wishes he could just get on with his life, that he could visit Quebec in the springtime with intentions of amour instead of protest, and facing bartenders in brasseries instead of cops in the street, like in Seattle.

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I joined him on the trip to Seattle. He insisted I go. He knew I had no good excuse not to. I had a few bucks in the bank (though he always told me I should keep it elsewhere, in a safe place), I had time on my hands (as I was recently laid off my job), I had no dependents (not even a dog) besides a few plants, and on top of it, he noted that I had the vehicle to get us there. You can finally put that thing to good use, he mentioned. He also said something about looking at it as a vacation.

After surviving the first couple of bouts of gas offenses by the police, we found ourselves less willing to flee.

Those days opened my eyes to 'what could be.' We arrived the day before the march and we quickly hooked up with an affinity group that included a number of his friends and acquaintances. We were immediately welcomed to bunk at one of the many flop houses opened to all of us who were converging around the center of the city. Meetings ensued. In houses and apartments, in make-shift warehouse space, in offices and cafes, we set to work discussing plans, strategies and considering the possibilities. There was clearly something electric in the air. I had never experienced anything like it. Many of us got drunk that night.

We awoke at five a.m. the next day; a cold and rainy November morning. Still dark. We all got dressed, drank coffee, ate something if we could, made final adjustments to packs and belongings, discussed mostly what to bring and what not to bring, checked for bandanas and lemon juice and goggles and masks, finally heading off to meet with the others, to form our piece of the pie. By six we were on the street, marching to the downtown core of Seattle, to converge again with other pieces of the pie. A simple folk strategy.

For me it was overwhelming. I could have drifted or been dragged in any countless number of ways. Waves upon waves of people, thousands and thousands, gathering and moving *en masse* to strategic intersections and points against the police blockades. All I could do was follow my friend, who seemed to move with intention, as though he somehow knew where to go, and what needed to be done. His years of training and experience in other relatively little skirmishes had prepared him for this.

Sometime around nine in the morning we were facing our first bout of spray and gas and other fearful police intimidation tactics. The rubber bullets and sound bombs came later. In between the bouts of running and shouting and raging and heaving (the pepper spray made me puke) we actually did some good work. In a linked-arm line we literally turned away delegates from entering the WTO meeting. We identified some weak spots in other locations where delegates were passing through, and rounded up others to fill the gaps. After surviving the first couple of bouts of gas offenses by the police, we found ourselves less willing to flee. I watched as my friend scooped a gas canister still spraying off the ground and heaved it back into the throngs of robocops, provoking cheers from those others who watched it happen. And together we subdued a man who'd begun beating on a young anarchist for smashing a Starbuck's window. The guy, who had been shouting something about no violence as he took down the kid, landed me with a sucker punch to my jaw, and for this my friend thrashed him good, beginning with a viscious kick to his knee and following up with some bouts to stomach and head. Vandalism isn't violence, my friend shouted at him as he crumbled, but this is! I'd never seen him hurt anyone intentionally before.

In my opinion he was at his best when, having found his calm, he faced off with a line of black-clad cops, men and women covered in armour, yielding weapons that are meant to kill or maim. He felt the urge to walk right up to one and spit upon his face mask, he told me later. But fear and reason got the better of him. He felt safe only at about two metres back. That seemed okay with them, too. Then he walked along the row of front-line piggies, like a battalion commander preparing his troops, and delivered an impassioned sermon gibing them for being so foolish as to believe that their job was to protect the interests of the corporate élite. Again he won raves from other protesters around.

It was an opportunity, he explained later, to talk to them. They had no choice but to listen. He went on to remind them that they have children or family who probably don't agree with their designated position, who are sickened by their job requirements. He reminded them that history would find them complicit, like the government they served, in crimes against humanity. Many averted his attempt at making eye contact directly, while others would stare defiantly back at him, relaying through their glare a message so clear it could only be telepathic: If I had the chance I'd gladly kill you.

Mr. So and So, he would call out, reading the cop's name tag (if he wore one), do they pay you enough to own your conscience?

•••

If I go, he tells me, I'll light myself on fire. I'll immolate myself: strip naked, pour a gallon of gas over my head and hold my arms out to the sides, like Jesus on the cross. I'll make sure there are cameras. I'll have a lighter in one hand. I'll shout out loud something about how capitalism is killing us, and then I'll do it, I'll flic the bic, light myself on fire. We need the PR.

I can't tell for sure whether he's joking or not. He's complicated, and his humour is often undetectable. For him it's usually good enough if it makes him chuckle inside. But he's media savvy, and crazy enough to do it, too. For me it's like one of those moments when a friend confesses to you that he or she is having suicidal thoughts. It sounds to me pat and trite to say oh, c'mon, life's worth living. Especially to someone who sincerely believes that outside of our hearts, in the physical world, we are all prisoners. I want to tell him he can better contribute to his cause alive than dead. Or all charred up, for that matter. But I can't help but wonder if that's true. He must be wondering too. This cause could surely use a martyr, after all. To speed things along.

I wish I had the guts to do it myself. But I'm too comfortable in my shackles. I offer to bring the marshmallows, instead. And besides, I could use another vacation.

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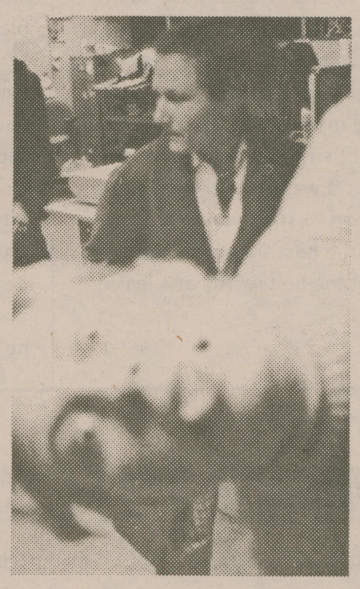
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On the train to Quebec

by Miguel R. MacDonald

In less than two weeks I will be on a train headed for the largest protest I have ever seen. Estimates are putting 50,000 protesters in Quebec City for the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) summit, where a group of 34 heads of states representing each of the countries of the Americas and the Caribbean (except Cuba) will come together. They will be protected by four kilometers of chain-link fence and thousands of police officers so that they may safely draw up their plans.

The FTAA fits into a lengthy list of global trade agreements accrued in the last ten years, the most recent precursor being the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). Under NAFTA's chapter 11, corporations can now sue governments for making laws that hurt their profits. So if United Parcel Service (UPS), finds out that Purolator at one time was receiving subsidies through Canada Post, UPS can then sue the pants off Canada Post.

How many other instances are there where a corporation might sue the Canadian government for subsidizing crown corporations? Already globalization is trying to lead health care to the chopping block.

Canada's trade negotiators have erred by listing "health insurance" under the General Agreement on Trades in Services (GATS) national treatment and market access rules. The result is that any attempt by Canada to strengthen public health care is exposed to trade challenges. Secretive trade panels may play a larger role in determining domestic health policy than public debate and government policy-making by democratically-elected members of government.

Data processing and on line information retrieval is also covered by the GATS rules. This means that foreign companies could access health information from outside the country, lowering corporate costs and threatening the privacy of health records.

I'm not a revolutionary and I don't think I have ever met a revolutionary at UVic.

The government of Canada can still have health care excluded from the GATS, an exclusion that would apply to all WTO members.

But forget about Canada; what about Mexico where NAFTA has flooded the corn and bean markets with American product, which has driven the price so far down that many Mexican farmers can no longer make a living off their own land?

Reverend Glen Davis, a Canadian Presbyterian minister who toured Mexico earlier this year to investigate the effects NAFTA, described people living in abject poverty because of life under NAFTA. Should the Mexican farmers lose their land in a vicious price war? They have one option: to work in one of the 370 factories near the US border, just opposite from El Paso, Texas. While there is no unemployment in an area with a population of 270,000, people work for seven dollars a day.

Davis concludes that, in practice, trade-agreement rights seem to take privilege over human rights. He says the world should ask itself if free trade is at the service of trade or at the service of people.

Is this the sort of pattern Canada should help extend all the way to the southern-most tip of Chile? It will only be a matter of time before the same problems come back to Alberta to put grain farmers out of work or to the West Coast to put the already-ailing fisheries out of their misery. Will the B.C. government be sued under NAFTA/ FTAA for its recent protection of a large area of the Great Bear Rain Forest?

When I was teaching English in Japan, I talked to a business man/multi-media artist who was having a bad day. In his bluesy state, he told me that 20 years ago his generation's mission was to make money. He said people were content with that mission. But as far as he could tell, the world was changing. "Soon just making money will not be enough," he told me. "There has to be something more."

Maybe that something more involves being one of the estimated 50,000 protesters in Quebec City on April 20. Perhaps it also involves scaling the four-kilometre section of chain-link fence erected around the conference centre in Quebec City. Maybe that something more involves revolution.

I'm not a revolutionary, and I don't think I have ever met any revolutionaries at UVic either. So why am I going to Quebec City for the FTAA protests? What is going to happen there that has made a university kid from a middle-class north-Alberta family want to see it happen?

There's a billboard outside of the Clearhue computer lab filled with information about the FTAA. You've probably seen tit or at least one like it. They are meant to spark discussion and get people talking about the FTAA and globalization. A blank sheet of paper invited people to comment/ rant about how they really felt about the FTAA. While I was sitting outside the lab last week two students leaving the computer lab passed by the billboard. On her way to the vending machines, one girl looked at the billboard and said, "What's FTAA?"

I'm going to Quebec City for her.

Before I go...

My reasons for going to Quebec

by Jason Gondziola

Lost in a fog of unreality, it still has not set in that I will be in Quebec City next week. Friends, family and those that I deeply care about are all asking me to reconsider this decision. It's not worth the risk, they say.

There's 50,000 people going, they won't miss you.

I won't kid anybody: I am afraid. Images of police brutality fly through my mind, filling me with worries about my own personal safety. Some people are going there with the intent of outright violence, and it concerns me that I may get caught up in that violence.

Despite this, I feel that I should go. Brave? Maybe. Stupid? Probably. So why am I going?

I want to add my voice to the tens of thousands who will be present, and while we aren't all united in what we want, we are united in what we do not want: We do not want to hand the corporations the type of powers that this agreement could entail. We do not want to be stripped of our ability to make decisions as a community.

Simply, trade is not that important. Trade, money and the entire marketplace are all human constructions. We invented these things and now we are placing their value higher than the value we give ourselves. We are being reduced to mere cash conduits, passing pieces of paper through the system. It's insulting.

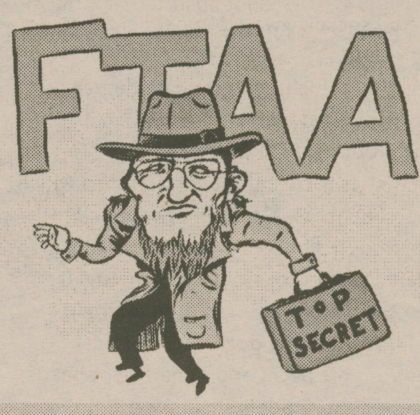
I want to be present, putting my dissatisfaction on display for all to see.

I want the government and the corporations to know that I don't agree with this deal. I want to meet like-minded people in the hope that we will meet again.

I want to feel, if only for a moment, that there are alternatives to our current system. I want to stand in the midst of the insanity, feeling an incredible energy pulsating through me, full of the confidence that we can do this, we can change things.

I want to burn this experience into my mind, tucking it deep inside me so that I will never forget.

That is why I am going.



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Filming on the hassle line

Activist Richard Boyce makes politics out of film

by Jessica Weirmier

Fifteen Walbran Valley blockaders slept in their tents at 5:30 on a chilly, dark October morning in 1998. Among the group dozed Vancouver Island-based cinematographer Richard Boyce. Without warning, they were jolted from their slumbers when 25 loggers jumped out of five trucks and roughed-up the group of non-violent protesters. It was dark. Insults flew from the mouths of those on both sides. The blockaders struggled to make sense of the attack. Boyce struggled to keep his video camera protected as a logger sprayed grease on it. The video was proof of the violence.

Boyce's presence in the Walbran that night is no surprise to those who know him. Even before his university days studying filmmaking at Concordia in the late 80s, Boyce had used film as a medium for raising awareness about social issues.

"Media is an incredibly powerful tool for educating and raising awareness in the community," says Boyce. "Society as a whole doesn't look at itself without filters, the media can expose things to them that they wouldn't normally look at because it's outside their normal realm of experience."

Boyce's BFA from Concordia University in filmmaking and his Master of Fine Arts in film production from the University of British Columbia in 1995 gave him the skills and experience to open a business in his hometown of Errington B.C., called Island Bound Media Works.

Errington is a small, mostly agricultural community located mid-way up the eastern side of Vancouver Island. It's the kind of community where everyone knows everyone else, and the yearly summer festival, "Hi Neighbour" is commonly known as "High Neighbour." This is where many hippies migrated after the summer of '68. And it was in this liberal, socially aware atmosphere that Boyce grew up.

Throughout his undergraduate degree, Boyce collaborated with classmates on 45 different productions. But it's the documentaries focusing on social issues which he remembers best. Most significant of which was a 15-minute film he co-produced with classmate Daniel Cross called *Dannyboy*. It followed the life of a young homeless man, Danny Clavin, and his dog. It won critical acclaim from his peers and department heads, and received the Golden Sheaf Award at the 1990 Yorkton Short Film Festival.

Dannyboy led to Cross and Boyce immersing their lives in Montreal's homeless community as they filmed another documentary called *Street* in their final two years of school.

After completing his MFA, Boyce gave the industry a go, only to realize he wasn't suited for life in mainstream media and film production. He saw the light after two years as a camera assistant working on productions like *The X-Files* and *Homeward Bound II*, and he decided to look for something else. After a brief stint filming a banana plantation in the Sahara desert, Boyce returned to Errington and began life as a self-employed cinematographer.

Today, he brings to his work all the experiences and lessons learned from his collaboration on the 78-minute documentary, *Street*.

Despite their earlier success with *Dannyboy*, Boyce and Cross felt they hadn't even scratched the surface of Montreal's homeless community. They got Concordia to commit to a major production on homelessness and spent their third and fourth years working on it as a graduating thesis.

"There are a lot of things that have to be in place before you can produce a film: you need a lot of equipment, you need a lot of money, you need a lot of film," says Boyce. Concordia's contribution to their project wasn't going to cut it, so they broke a rule or two.

They had little choice but to buck the Canadian film system by garnering National Film Board (NFB) support, "something students aren't supposed to receive." Cross dropped out of his final year of studies in order to qualify for NFB funding. The following year, Boyce took over the NFB funding after graduation, and Cross returned to finish school.

For those two years they ate, slept, drank and lived *Street*. Boyce's life became enmeshed in the lives of those he documented. Sometimes things got too close.

"Danny was very addicted to cocaine so he was trying to get off the street but he was going in between jail and the street and he was trying to go through detox, and he was making huge discoveries about his past in terms of sexual abuse," says Boyce. The withdrawal and stress got to be too much and one time near the end of the project he threatened Boyce.

"I gave my camera to Daniel and grabbed Danny and gave him a big hug and he broke down in tears and just cried. I'd known him at that point for close to five years and he had never threatened, or done anything like that. It was just his state of mind, he was going through all this turmoil, he was just lashing out," he says.

A similar situation occurred with another film subject, Frank O'Maley. He was recovering in the hospital from losing his legs to diabetes. They took him out for his birthday; "the deal was he was to go back to the hospital, and of course, once he got drunk and everything else, he didn't want to go to the hospital anymore," says Boyce. They put him in a cab, got him to the hospital, and when Boyce brought the wheelchair around O'Maley punched him in the head. "He was treating me like the son that didn't want to talk to him. O'Maley had seven kids whom he hadn't spoken to since before his 20-year federal penitentiary incarceration for first-degree murder."

Through his passion for raising awareness about social issues, Boyce let things get too personal, too involved.

"That was it for me," says Boyce. "That combined with the fact that we'd run out of money."

He left in 1993. But not before spending two months preparing the 60 hours of film and 120 hours of sound for its intensive final edit.

"Of course Daniel Cross wanted me to stay and [make the final] edit and at that point I just couldn't do that," says Boyce.

He took a multiculturalism grant, flew to Europe and explored his Dutch background for nine months. The result: an unpolished script near the back of a 'things to film' project file.

Four years later Cross, married with children, completed editing *Street* on a part-time basis with a little help from Peter Wontonic, director of *Manufacturing Consent*. *Street* won people's choice award at the 1997 Hot Docs Canadian Film Festival. Since then CBC has aired *Street* 11 times.

Until the festival, mainstream media had little interest in airing the documentary. "That's the power of the people, right? And then once the people saw it they told their friends. And CBC registered such a colossal amount of people watching it that they showed it again and there were still a lot of people watching it. The ratings haven't gone down," says Boyce.

"It 's not just interesting, it really can happen to anyone. People who are homeless are there through a whole number of reasons but they're human. That's the part we forget when we're cleaning up the city and gentrifying everything," explains Boyce.

These days in Errington Boyce's work seems far removed from issues of homelessness on

photo provided

Montreal's streets. But he hasn't stopped filming issues of social relevance. He's interested in recording B.C.'s forestry practises.

On his own time, Boyce has covered rallies, protests and events all related to the logging industry.

The result is material he's been collecting over the past few years. "It's what I've been unable to broadcast through the mainstream about my concerns with the logging industry on Vancouver Island," says Boyce. The 45-min documentary, called *Straight Up Questions To Ask*, is a compilation of voices and viewpoints ranging from Jean Chretien, Ujjal Dosanjh and NDP candidate/environmentalist Betty Krawczyk to biologists and concerned citizens. It also shows the 1998 encounter between Walbran Valley blockaders and loggers. It premiered March 30 at the Errington Community Hall along with paintings and sculptures by two other local artists.

During dinner at a family friend's house one night back in October 1998 Boyce decided to haul his video equipment up to the Walbran Valley. It was the story told by 18-year-old Lucy Carsen of threats made to her by a grader operator, which inspired him to jump in the back of a pick-up and wake up the next morning at the Walbran blockade.

"I realized they were in a really, really dangerous position and if they were going to continue in the position, there could be the potential for violence," says Boyce. He believed that if he were there, acting as a media presence, he could thwart violent confrontation. He was wrong.

Early on the fourth morning, Timberwest employees attacked the blockaders. According

continued on page 13

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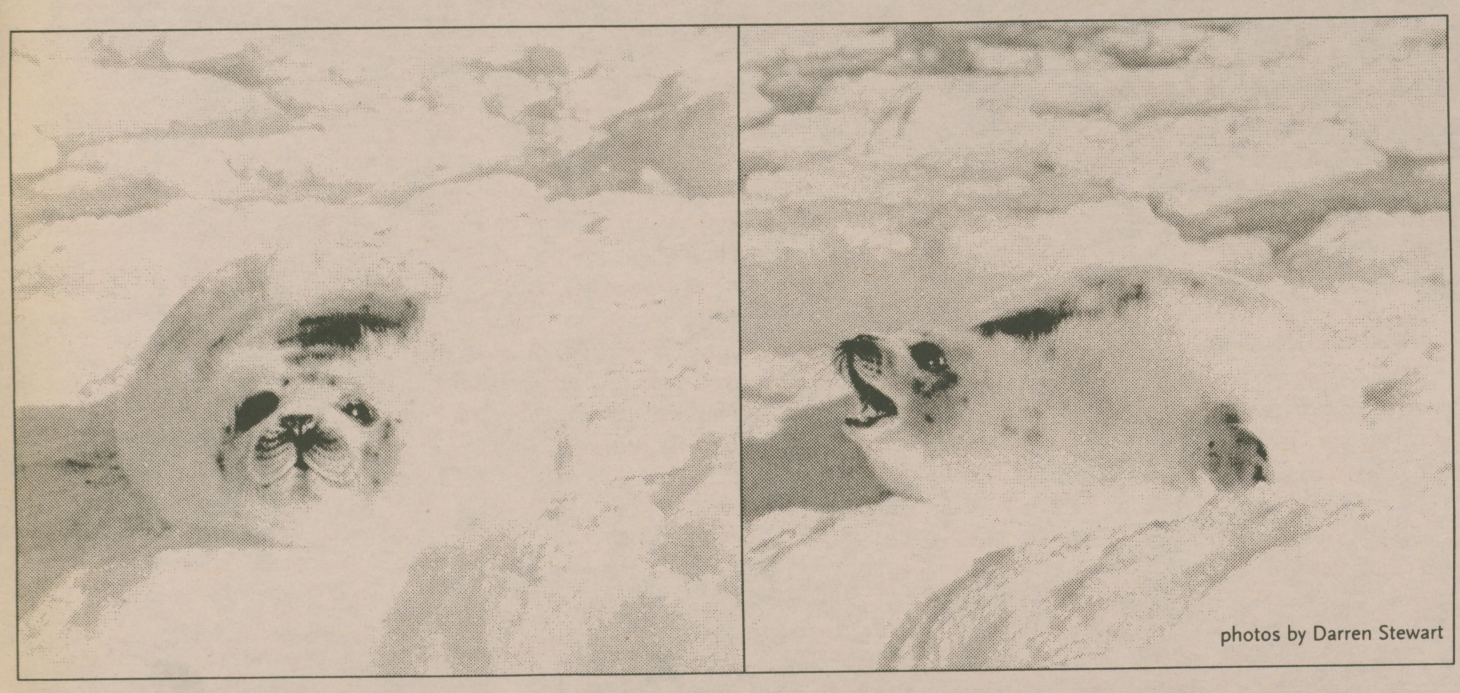

photos by Darren Stewart

Exploring the politics of the seal hunt

by Darren Stewart

The annual East Coast seal harvest began this month in the Gulf of St. Lawrence, despite criticisms from animal rights groups that it is both unnecessary and uneconomical. They say the demand for seal products has fallen dramatically, while governments and hunters insist the hunt is a necessary proponent of the local economy.

Hunters are permitted to kill 275,000 harp and hooded seals this year, the same amount of allowable kills over the each of the past five years.

Government studies suggest that number is sustainable, while scientists are split. The Eastern seal hunt has been politically and scientifically contentious over the past two decades, and a flood of scientific information has been released on both sides of the debate.

I was on the ice the day before the seal hunt began this year in the Gulf of St. Lawrence. I flew out from Charlottetown via helicopter on a trip for journalists, sponsored by the International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW).

Smith said he believes that many Canadians would be appalled if they realized what their tax dollars were supporting.

We flew with IFAW and marine biologist escorts into a massive area of broken ice pans in the North Atlantic. A scout plane had scoured the expanse of ice several hours before, looking for groups of seal pups. The ice below, averaging two to three feet thick, resembled a giant bowl of soup with a top layer of crushed crackers. We found the seals immediately but it was difficult to find a spot to touch down. The previous few days had been windy, and the ice pans were splintered and broken.

After more than an hour of tedious searching, the first pilot touched down on a pan of ice slightly wider than his helicopter. The pan swayed as the rotors ran out of spin. We jumped out of the helicopter onto a foreign surface. Looking around in every direction was ice glare and huge blue sky. It was the surface of the moon, silent, beautiful and cold. We carried sticks to check the stability of the ice below at every step (at one point, a German journalist suddenly slid through to his thighs).

Seal pups, several days old and skittish with the sudden appearance of the alien machine, lifted their round faces in curiosity and barked. Some scrabbled awkwardly away, looking back over their fuzzy and jiggly bodies. At this age, they're fat like cartoon characters and can't move quickly over their frozen cradle. I wanted to cuddle them, protect them, take them home, shoo them into the water away from the inevitable hunters. I wanted to stand guard.

Unlike Inuit seal hunting in Nunavat, the Eastern seal hunt is carried out by commercial cod fishers hoping to pad their income, and regain a livelihood after the collapse of cod stocks. The hunt is estimated by local governments to bring $12 million to the Canadian economy each year. But IFAW says the hunt's value has been exaggerated and, after subtracting government subsidies, it is worth about $2 million. The hunt relied heavily on subsidies in recent years due to declining demand for seal products. Until last year, hunters received a direct subsidy on a per-kill basis. The hunt is still subsidized indirectly through HRDC job creation grants to seal product industries, such as a struggling Newfoundland company that makes seal salami.

The herd watched as our small group, clad in orange buoyant survival suits, balanced precariously on the shifting ice pans, squinting back. The pups' eyes are large and black, and their coats are white and shaggy. Some had matured and were losing their coats. Others were puffs of furry Jell-O, with dark eyes and pink mouths. Their bark is barely audible and sounds like a cross between a cat and a human baby's happy coos.

They are also innocent. Unbearably so, knowing what fate awaits them. They had all been alive less than 12 days, and had been recently deserted by their mothers. But they're playful. They look happy.

Harp seals can live 30 years, but are hunted by humans – in either Greenland or Canada – every day of their life. The nursing stage lasts the first 12 days of their life. They wait in the coming weeks for the ice to melt so they can swim. If they survive the Newfoundland hunt, they will soon plop into the dark waters below and swim north.

"Our argument is not about whether or not the hunt is pretty," said Rick Smith, IFAW Director. "We argue that the hunt is carried out in a way that wouldn't be acceptable – for humane, economic and sustainability reasons – in any other animal industry or hunt in Canada." Smith said he believes that many Canadians would be appalled if they realized what their tax dollars were supporting. He said his group hopes the government takes a more active role in regulating the industry. "All the blood on the ice isn't the point," said Smith, who holds a doctorate in seal biology. "There's a serious level of tolerance for inhumane acts in this industry."

The ice conditions are bad this year, said Smith, which means hunters will have to rely on shooting the seals then hooking them into the boat. Smith estimates that for every seal that is killed and captured by this method, another is maimed but gets away, and dies soon after. He worries that these numbers aren't reflected in the numbers which hunters report, which could skew population projections.

But government officials say hunting practices have improved over the past decades and that the hunt is closely monitored. "After 25 years in the spotlight, there's very little controversy anymore," said Roger Simon, the area manager for Fisheries and Oceans Canada.

Simon said the allowable kill numbers are set at a sustainable quota each year based on estimates of seal populations and scientific study. He said fisheries officers monitor activity on the ice.

"Rules about humane killing practices have been put into place and there's no question that the numbers are sustainable," said Simon.

At the end of the hunt each year, IFAW produces videotapes it says prove the hunt is cruel and poorly regulated. The group gives government officials hours of tape, documenting what they say is more than 100 violations of marine mammal regulations and the Criminal Code. The footage shows seals clubbed but not killed until later, seals floundering helpless in blood clouded water and seals being skinned alive. Simon admits IFAW catches many violations each year, but he said he isn't too concerned.

"There's not 100 per cent compliance on anything," he said. "The things we see on tape are the exceptions and not the rule."

According to the Canadian Sealers Association (CSA), the national group representing sealers, hunters comply with regulations very closely and work with federal and provincial governments to ensure the quotas are sustainable and hunters are getting a fair price for their catch.

"For the past fifteen years, we have examined our industry and made concessions and changes designed to continuously improve what we do," said Tina Fagan, CSA executive director. She said her group provides a voluntary training program for sealers teaching the humane method to kill. The CSA recently received a $50,000 grant from the Newfoundland government, allowing it to remain active.

Under Canadian law, seals are considered the same as fish, which doesn't allow them much protection or respect from DFO officials, politicians or hunters. Fisheries Minister Herb Dhaliwal has said he will review the Marine Mammal Regulations, which currently fall within the Fisheries Act, later this year, in an effort to make them more effective and relevant.

Letter from Guatemala

Looking for democracy

by Kristina Bitterman

Since the Peace Accord of 1996, we may not have war in Guatemala, but this does not mean there is peace.

The people in power here are the upper class Mestizos with virtually no concern for the indigenous people of this country. Lip service to human rights is paid by the president, Alfonso Portillo, but he is not the man running the country. Rios Montt runs the country, the leader of the dominant party in Congress. He is banned from ever being president because he was leader of the successful 1982 coup. This is the same man who ran the country during the particularly brutal years of '82 - '83, and created the "Scorched Earth" policy, murdering untold hundreds of Indigenous people.

Democracy is a great idea, but how can it be put into practice when the large indigenous population has little access to the media, to current events? Many speak a Mayan language (there are at least 22 dialects in this country) and Spanish as a second language, or not at all, compounding the difficulty of understanding Spanish media.

As many are illiterate, reading the newspaper is not an option. Television is sometimes available, but is not too helpful. There are four different channels, all are owned by a Mexican, Angel Gonzales, who lives in Florida. The Minister of Communications, Luis Rabbe, is the brother-in-law of Angel Gonzales. Needless to say, all tv channels support the party in power.

Education and literacy are difficult for the poor to obtain, as public schools cost $200 to $400 (US) a year, and the cost increases with the level of education.

We had an independent television station a year ago, but it was shut down by our Minister of Communications, Luis Rabbe.

Education and literacy are difficult for the poor to obtain, as public schools cost $200 to $400 (US) a year, and the cost increases with the level of education. These prices are prohibitive for many families here in the highlands (and elsewhere); many families have six to eight children to feed and take care of.

Lack of education means no democracy when so few can read, when there is such little access to information. How are we to obtain peace when the indigenous population continues to be oppressed by a dicatorship? There is no dialogue; little money leaves the capital where there are few indigenous people, and little input is accepted from the districts outside of the capital.

To make matters worse, the government of one year is arguably in crisis. Rumours, allegations and evidence of problems in the Guatemalan Republican Front (FRG) keep surfacing. Several people in Congress tried to change the drinking law, such as Rios Montt, by acting above the law. Several were kicked out of Congress for this breach of trust, but not Rios Montt. He has had some of his responsibilities "relieved"– clearly he cannot be kicked out of Congress for such a small transgression when he is running the country!

Democracy is something that could use some improvements here in Guatemala, and education would be the best way of improving democracy, as well as investing in the future of the people. Corruption is a problem here, as in many places, though it's unusually overt. The government is faltering, not a good sign if real and lasting peace is to be obtainned any time in the near future.

The economics of a healthy mouth:

Victoria's poor need a reduced-fee dental clinic

by Gillian Jerome

John Coady, 57, is a living example of the expensive repercussions of poor dental health. With six teeth left, all of which have abscessed at least twice, next week Coady will ask a provincial tribunal for $1100 dentures.

"My mouth is in an angry condition all the time," he says. "I pop Ibuprofen like candies to soothe the pain."

Coady says that he spent most of his adult life ignoring his teeth. "In my late teens and early 20s I was strong as a bull and figured that I was invincible. And then, gradually, my gums went soft. My teeth never were all that strong I suppose."

Now Coady spends most of his days in pain with a mouth that drains all his energy.

The next step before the dentures is extensive oral surgery to scrape the bone spurs off his jaw. But Coady says he's resourceful. Once he gets his mouth in order, he'll get off welfare.

Meanwhile, Coady calls welfare's $250 cap per annum on dental work "unconscionable."

"It'll pay for extraction but no restorative work at all. So you get 'em pulled and then you're toothless."

A report issued last year by the United States surgeon general calls the link between poverty and poor dental health a "silent epidemic." Yet so far Canada has no national policy on oral health for people in need. This may change after a recent Victoria report calling for a reduced-fee clinic and a national study on access to decent dental care.

Poor people don't go to the dentist on a regular basis because they can't afford to says Vancouver Island Public Interest Research Group (VIPIRG) researcher Bruce Wallace, author of *Brushed Aside: Poverty and Dental Health Care in Victoria.*

One in four people living in poverty leave the dentist with a tooth pulled instead of getting the restorative work they need. While the province offers full coverage to 144,000 kids through the Healthy Kids Program, adults get $250 in yearly coverage, with the option to apply for emergency funding.

Most people receiving welfare don't know that they have any dental coverage at all, says Wallace.

Meanwhile, the Ministry of Health provides only 80 per cent of the costs of private dental work, asking dentists with private practices to pick up the tab.

The lack of provincial support sparks the ire of local dentists surveyed, who say the government must consider public clinics, or even private-public partnerships.

Most of the 24 local dentists surveyed said the Ministry of Health expects private clinics to donate their work, a demand they can't afford to fill.

"The costs of providing dental care is very high due to the costs of equipment and supplies. Most dental offices run at 70 per cent overhead. This means that if the dentist worked for free, a $100 filling still costs $70," wrote one dentist.

> My mouth is in an angry condition all the time, I pop Ibuprofen like candies to soothe the pain.
>
> *John Coady, 57*

But poor people living in Victoria, or anywhere else in Canada, don't have to suffer from a range of complications. For $300,000 a year in grants and user fees, community groups want to reinstate a dental clinic in Victoria based on a system of reduced fees, a sliding scale offering anywhere from a 20 to 60 per cent discount.

The alternatives, including trips to emergency, heart palpitations, asthma and 275 possible diseases, cost taxpayers infinitely more.

But dental care hasn't always been so difficult for people on welfare and the working poor. From 1975 to 1986, Victoria's poor had access to cheap dental work at a Fernwood clinic housed in what is now the Belfry Theatre reception room. With an operating budget of $130,000, the centre helped about 4,000 people a year, funded by foundation grants, user fees and government support. Local dentist Dr. Bill Bassett spent five years working at the clinic.

Then a recent graduate of dentistry, Bassett leapt from a short stint in private care to what he calls "tough work," caring for dire needs on a daily basis.

"It was a shock for the first month. When you work in private, you spend most of your time giving optimum treatment to people with regular care. I had days [at the clinic] where I saw 15 to 20 patients and 90 per cent of those were extractions. That's so far removed from private."

Now a teacher of dental hygiene at Camosun College, Bassett wants to help the next dentist-in-charge at a new reduced fee clinic here in Victoria.

Bassett points to successful public clinics in Vancouver and Toronto and says that the government should be more supportive not only of a local clinic but policy for guaranteed funding.

"Private practice dentists can't satisfy the needs of a great segment of the population without support."

Funding for the Fernwood clinic was pulled in 1986 when Bill Vanderzalm's Socred government siphoned off all support for reduced-fee clinics.

But accessible dental care could make a come-back in Victoria. Wallace, along with three local poverty groups, is lobbying three provincial bodies to get back the cash flow from the bygone days and set up a new clinic.

But so far, no commitments.

"We just fought like hell to keep the Burnaby clinic open after the school district tried to pull its funding," says Blair Marshall, ministerial assistant to provincial health minister Corky Evans.

When asked if that means funding will be available, Marshall couldn't say for sure.

But Wallace says he's optimistic. With an election in the air, there's a good chance the province will support the project especially after the January throne speech

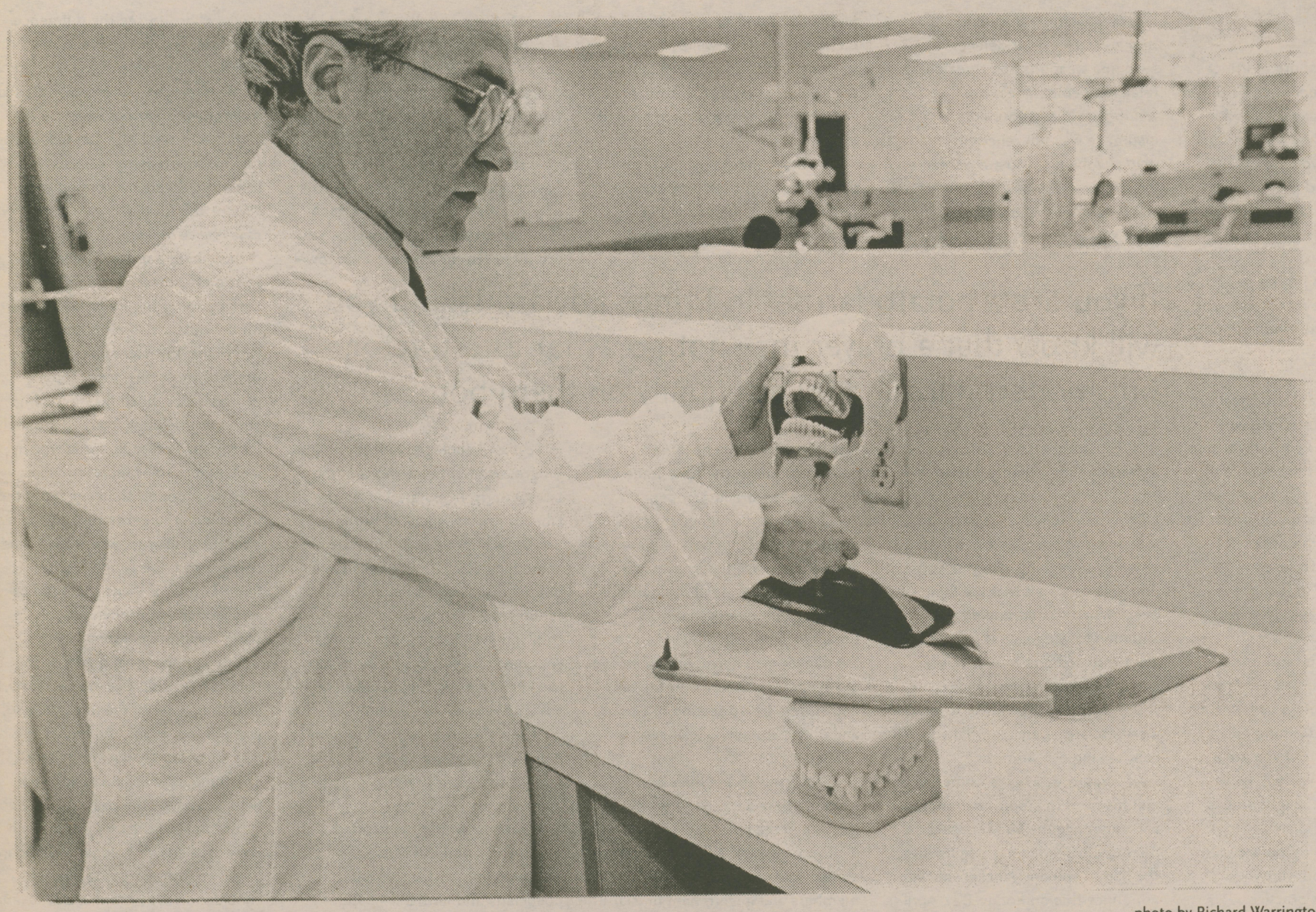

photo by Richard Warrington

Dr. Bill Bassett, now teaching dental hygiene at Camosun college, spent five years working at a Fernwood reduced-fee dental clinic. He supports the effort of community groups to open a new clinic in Victoria.

announcing a greater commitment to health.

But provincial lobbying isn't easy. A coalition of groups including the Cool Aid Society, Together Against Poverty Society and the James Bay Community Project are asking three provincial bodies to sit down and get the project started. They want $150,000 annual operating costs and $50,000 in capital funding.

"It's extremely affordable when you compare costs involved with emergency care visits and bigger health problems which happen as a result," says Wallace.

But Judy Burgess at the James Bay Community Project doubts that the province will commit. "We just have to keep the notion alive, to write and talk about a dental clinic here. We certainly haven't failed. We just need the synchronicity and the momentum to make it happen." Burgess wrote a business plan for the clinic. She says that with a kick-start from the province, the clinic could easily run itself on grant money and reduced user fees.

Since the February release of the report, Wallace has heard from supporters in Vancouver, Kelowna, Calgary and Ottawa.

Are they hopping on the accessible dental circuit?

"Mostly they say 'good work.' I think people are surprised to see the report because nothing like it has been done before."

So far, Wallace says, the response isn't proactive due to a lack of national funding.

Wallace is calling for action from the federal government for a national study on oral health and ensuing recommendations to individual provinces, akin to what happens in the US.

Both the American surgeon general and the Senate launched a full-blown inquiry on oral health, calling lack of access to dental work a "national hidden epidemic." Although the same problem exists here in Canada on a smaller scale, it's never been given much attention at either the provincial or federal level.

A few reduced-fee clinics exist in Canada, namely in large metropolitan areas with large populations of people living in poverty.

Closer to home, Vancouver has three clinics, including the soon-to-open Sunrise Clinic operated by the Portland Hotel Society in the downtown eastside. It's a model Wallace says he pays particular attention to because it's built to service those most in need.

"I'm surprised that this is even happening," says Sunrise executive director Mark Townsend who has spent the past four years organizing the $400,000 project, supported by municipal, provincial and federal governments.

The society works with the poorest of the city's poor, fighting for housing as well as proper medical and dental care. "We saw that people had these terrible problems with their teeth and they basically just had to suffer."

While the province prides itself on an innovative project aims at kids, adults like John Coady are often left fighting for the few healthy teeth left, or a set of dentures to replace them.

The province funds a $120,000 Healthy Kids Dental van program which tours remote areas in Northern B.C., reaching kids who wouldn't otherwise see a dentist. Every Spring, the husband and wife dentist team Dr. Darryl and Christine Boag, pack up the van and head north.

But Wallace says it's time to take a closer look at the need for long-term, guaranteed support for adults.

"The ministry is willing to look at a business plan and then go from there," says B.C. Ministry of Social Development and Economic Security communications officer Mike Long.

Taken from *Brushed Aside*:

- 67 per cent of people interviewed receiving welfare in Victoria said they have never been informed of their dental benefits
- 21 per cent said a dentist has helped them by donating a service, reducing a fee, waiving a bill or providing a payment plan
- the results of poor health include a number of diseases as well as social and economic consequences including loss of self esteem, speech impairment, restricted social and community participation, diminished job prospects, and increased likelihood of having problems with landlords, bank managers, the police, doctors and lawyers
- 44 per cent of low-income earners have dental insurance compared to 82 per cent for those earning more than $55,000 a year (Source: Ontario Dental Association)
- 53 per cent of Canadians with dental insurance make regular dental appointments, while only 33 per cent without make regular appointments (Source: Canadian Dental Association)
- Alberta's dentists host what the Alberta Dental Association calls the "world's largest free one-day clinic." In one day, almost 9,000 dental procedures were provided to poor people in Alberta

Taken from *Oral Health in America*, a May 2000 study by the US Surgeon General

- 26 million kids have no insurance coverage for dental care
- 100 million Americans lack private dental insurance
- nearly half of all poor blacks and Hispanics have untreated tooth decay compared to 27 per cent of all poor whites
- a third of low-income kids have at least one untreated decayed tooth by age nine, compared with 17 per cent of kids living above the poverty line
- 40 per cent of Americans lack fluoridated water
- tooth decay is the most common chronic childhood disease, five times more common than asthma and seven times more common than hay fever
- more than 51 million school hours are lost each year to dental illness
- severe gum disease affects 19 per cent of adults from age 25 to 44
- oral cancers are diagnosed in about 30,000 people each year; 8,000 people die of these diseases annually
- researchers have established firm links between chronic oral infections and stroke, premature births and diseases of the heart and lung

The PEI potato blight: Lay me down in a field of green with all that history

by Kent Bruyneel

The water near the shore of Prince Edward Island gathers in pools of red clay dust. You can take off all your clothes if you want and try very hard to sing out loud. If you are on a beach with rocks and pebbles like diamonds you can start to pick them up, maybe keep them in a small cave, hide them away.

If the shoreline is not so perfect, if there are sandbars everywhere, you can probably make all kinds of things up.

You can run.

If you have a decent wind you can make it across a potato field very easily in the summer sun. If you step lightly you can watch the reams of potato blossoms as they sway and dive beside your feet. If you watch closely you can see the oceans of history in those fields; forever working and forever in fear of the demon virus that may cause crop ruination.

If you are a potato farmer in Prince Edward Island you will know that a prayer may not go as far as a tractor, but modern farming relies equally on them both. If you are a potato farmer here, you will know what causes ring rot, blight and potato wart.

If you were shipping potatoes to the United States you were prohibited from that practice sometime near Halloween due to an isolated case of potato wart. If you were here in November when the ban came down heavy on PEI potatoes, you have surely become impatient. If you are a citizen and expect your federal government to rise immediately to your defence swinging weapons and threatening retaliatory embargoes, you'll be waiting a while. If your crop insurance was not renewed from last year's problems, you are wary of even the slightest bad news. If you are still standing after the export ban gets lifted you are brave, smart, lucky even.

If you are a potato farmer in Prince Edward Island you will know that a prayer may not go as far as a tractor, but modern farming relies equally on them both.

If you are the Minister of Agriculture for Canada, Lyle Vanclief, you rode into town today, like a knight, to assure the farmers of PEI that when you suggested they start growing something else you were not doing so as a sign that the fight was over. When you compared the situation to widgets – if people don't want your widgets, you said, you can't keep making your widgets – you meant it as a positive. If you are a potato farmer, this is what you will call "talking out your ass."

If you are Vanclief, a farmer who lost his farm to crop ruination, you will announce the Food Inspection Agency of America has begun lifting the ban. If you are Vanclief you will announce this on Potato Day, April 9, in a grand hotel, with the men and women who work the soil standing all around you. If you are Vanclief, this is your ace in the hole and you know it. You will say, "This is a giant step forward." And you will be hazy on the details of the restrictions – at the very least there will be mandatory washing and spraying of all table and seed potatoes leaving this province – and on the zoning of Prince Edward Island.

If you are Vanclief, you will no doubt side-step questions about why you would try to persuade PEI farmers to change their livelihood, their history, due to a low-rent fuckaround that will become a cautionary tale of the New Trade Era, when borders are just Imperialist Fences – where an innocuous problem like potato wart, a purely aesthetic disease that makes the potato unattractive but not harmful, one prevalent in less than 100 potatoes in one small field can cause the dangerous interruption of an age-old economy – where only the tall and strong, get to see the rule book, and only the powerful can see for miles.

If you are Vanclief then you wouldn't have set foot here without that ace in the hole, and you know it.

If you were there, in that hotel so stuffed with media and board members and government officials, today, listening to the new plan, the division of this province into four zones with varying rates of restrictions depending at least in part on their proximity to the infected site, you were probably heartened to hear Mr. Vanclief say, "we asked [the Americans] for their science (proving continued presence of potato wart or threat of same on the Island's farms), and they could not show us any."

If you are Mitch Murphy or Wayne Easter – the Tory provincial minister of agriculture for PEI and the MLA for Charlottetown respectively – you will try to appear as more than towel jockeys and apologists for the Progressive Conservatives and the Liberal Party. If you are Easter, the Liberal, you will speak of how Vanclief's statement about "farming something else" helped because it put the discussion back in the "spotlight."

If you are Murphy, you will wear your best shit-eating grin, and pray like hell the Americans Do As They Say, and re-open the gates.

If you are either you will tug and pull at your collar and speak softly, though straight into the microphone. You will spin.

If you are in that overstuffed media room you will sense the benign animosity the two sides – politicians and farmers – naturally have for one another; their jobs could not be any more different after all. You will stare at the Federal Minister and his gang of fixers, and at the Potato Board representative, and his gang of fixers, and you will try very hard to see the difference. But if you leave the foyer of the hotel and listen as some of the 400 potato growers in attendance at the closed-door question and answer period with the Federal Minister talk to each other in the parking lot, you will know the difference immediately. "We're still fucked" You will hear one say. "We're fucked."

If you are a potato farmer and your pick-up truck is lining the parking lot of the Rodd Royalty Hotel on the outskirts of Charlottetown, where the Minister spoke, you are probably not convinced. You are probably not the only one milling about in the lobby. You are probably flanked by Potato Board Members, and Superfarmer representatives. You are probably thinking about the first such emergency meeting called after the embargo, where the Irving corporation, the Granddaddy Superfarmer of them all, stood up and demanded immediate compensation, before all others. Another of the great giants in the potato business, Cavendish Farms, is also the owner of the infected field; you will, no doubt, remember this. You are probably standing there dreaming of your father, and your field, or maybe the past.

But in your dreams you are not wearing a suit or holding a clipboard or negotiating, or going home to consider a vote on this latest proposal to pry back open the American gates.In your daydream you are probably somewhere green, where the water is ever in sight, and you are alone in a field with all that wealth, all that history.

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Every year UVic wastes a river of water

In 1998, the campus guzzled 29 litres per second, as much water as its entire 17,000-strong student body would use in a 92-hour non-stop shower.

by Tim Harvey

UVic's immense plumbing network snakes through the walls and under the ground to meet the demands of research, irrigation and aging toilets, pumping a virtual river through the pipes.

In 1998, the campus guzzled 29 litres per second, as much water as its entire 17,000-strong student body would use in a 92-hour non-stop shower.

"It's excessive," says Emily McGiffin, coordinator of the UVic Sustainability Project, the group responsible for UVic's first-ever water-use audit last year.

According to geography student and report author Dionne Whyte, UVic uses 1.6 per cent of the water distributed by the Capital Regional District (CRD)here on campus. "We have a big impact on the region," he says. "We have to place ourselves within the larger context."

All of UVic's water needs flow as potable water from the Sooke reservoir. The dam in Sooke is being raised to meet projected future demands, despite controversy and the fact that this spring's water levels are 30 per cent below current dam capacity.

A 'ring main' encircles UVic's academic core to bring clean water to campus facilities; once used, 'grey' water unloads into the sewage systems of Saanich and Oak Bay, which costs 11 cents per cubic metre. Last year UVic paid over $21,000 to Oak Bay alone.

The largest drain on campus water is the aquatics research facility behind the Cunningham building. The virtual river habitat raises fish in a flow of 364 litres per minute – 21 per cent of UVic's total consumption.

"The fish need more water," says Ralph Scheurle, Animal Care Manager. "But our goal is to expand without using more water."

Scheurle envisions a flow rate tripled to about 1,100 litres per minute, using a closed-loop filtration system to recirculate most of the water. "We can't put more into the sewage than we're putting down now," said Scheurle. "There's a limit to what sewers can handle."

According to Scheurle, recirculation technology will cost "in the million-dollar range." The UVSP predicts that with a closed-loop system, the facility could consume 60 per cent less water. Only water intentionally toxified for research purposes would enter Oak Bay sewage.

In 1994, UVic decreased irrigation consumption by one third when it piloted a computerized system called Rainbird. According to Dick Chappel, Director of UVic Facilities Management, it's "probably the most advanced irrigation system in Canada." Linking a weather station with soil-moisture monitors, Rainbird solved the problem of watering lawns on rainy days.

But irrigation still accounts for 18.5 per cent of UVic consumption and Whyte envisions further improvement. He points out that if grass simply grows longer, soil has a buffer against evaporation and needs less water.

Whyte would also like UVic to plant native grasses that are adapted to local climates and require less irrigation.

"Ultimately," Whyte notes, "it will come down to the image of the campus."

Chappel doesn't envision a shift in grass type. "There is still a feeling that as a publicly-funded area, the grounds should be treated like a park, so there is a need to keep things nice and green," said Chappel.

He says that many of the water audit recommendations are flawed, such as those promoting rooftop rain collection and recycled grey-water irrigation.

Without an infrastructure, he points out, these projects represent "a huge capital expense with logistical difficulties."

The Univeristy of British Columbia uses the compost toilet in its Choi building, one of the technologies UVSP hopes to see implemented. It uses no water and produces only soil. In contrast, some of UVic's oldest toilets consume over 13 litres per flush.

Whyte says the "monster flushers" in buildings like the MacPherson Library and Cornett could be in service for years because "the prevalent attitude is 'if it's not broken, don't fix it.'"

"But given the prospect of toilets in a landfill, it can be better to modify old ones for peak efficiency," said Whyte.

Chappel says worn-out lavatories will always be refit with better technology, citing the occupancy-detectors now used in urinals. An ultra-low-flush toilet has been installed for testing in Finnerty Express.

There is concern that these toilets, which flush on about six litres of water, won't have the force to clear their bowl with a single flush. But as the city and university expand in a region that isn't getting any wetter, the pressure is on to reduce the water flushing through

Words with the Rhino

On public pissing and the Ghetto Zoo

by Gillian Jerome

A couple of weeks ago ravers and Rhinos took the City of Vancouver to task on their lame-ass bylaws against all-night parties. While in Vancouver at a flashy cotton-candy demonstration, *the Martlet* caught up with Svend Robinson and Liar Liar, leader of the Vancouver Rhino contingent. After getting arrested for pissing on a public building and told he would be thrown in the slammer if he faced the crowd and spoke – "You 'll start a riot goddammitt!" – Liar Liar tackled *the Martlet* reporter and stuffed her in a telephone booth. He stood outside with his cell phone as the two entertained the following conversation:

> I suggest that we enclose the entire area with plexiglass. Tourists will come from far and wide to see our Ghetto Zoo. This way they can have the "ghetto experience" without actually getting their hands dirty.
>
> *Liar Liar, Vancouver Rhino candidate*

Martlet: Who's the leader of the Rhino Party?

Liar Liar: Brian "Godzilla" Salmi

Martlet: Tell me a petit peu about the founder Jacques Ferron.

Liar Liar: Jacques Ferron was a medical doctor, playwright, fiction writer and philanthropist from Quebec. He founded the Rhinoceros Party in 1963 to bring the theatre of the absurd into the political arena. He died in 1985.

Martlet: Has Liar Liar ever been caught pissing on a public building?

Liar Liar: I'm a professional politician, I piss on the public.

Martlet: And now for the most original question in Vancouver politics, what do you think should be done about the idiots trying to do something about the downtown East side?

Liar Liar: These people lack vision. I suggest that we enclose the entire area with plexiglass. Tourists will come from far and wide to see our Ghetto Zoo. This way they can have the "ghetto experience" without actually getting their hands dirty. We'll make a killing off the admission sales not to mention the pay per view possibilities.

Martlet: What's your take on the US withdrawing support for international enviro-regulations at the Kyoto conference on the environment?

Liar Liar: Oh, definitely a good move. George knows that he's only going to be in power for one term. Why should he be concerned with the long term consequences of environmental devastation? He's just making hay while the sun shines. Also, he's got to pay back the guys that rigged the election for him.

Martlet: If the Rhinos could send you on an all-expense paid trip to a) the post-Cold War wastelands of Siberia, b) a small fishing village in Bali or c) to Prince George to investigate Hedy Fry's allegations of cross burnings, where would you go?

Liar Liar: Siberia. I've always considered Russia to be very interesting. Stalin had some good ideas, he just happened to be on the wrong side.

Martlet: Do you sleep on your stomach or your ass or both?

Liar Liar: Politics is an orgy of power and greed. I'll sleep on (or with) anyone or anything that will increase my chance of getting elected.

Martlet: World trade leaders are drumming up policy for the upcoming World Summit in Quebec. Meanwhile, folks back here are bawking about the need for transparency and a release of the full text. Do you give a flying piss about participatory democracy?

Liar Liar: I believe in participatory democracy. Bureaucrats and politicians should participate. As far as the general public is concerned... I think that they should just keep watching tv.

Martlet: Any whiff of a Rhino rock concert in Quebec city in April?

Liar Liar: No, not so far, but I caught a whiff of a SqueeGee guy the other day.

Martlet: Picture this: April 1976. Would you have gone to play with seals in Labrador with Bridget Bardot?

Liar Liar: Absolutely. Bridget Bardot was cute. Seals are cute too. They're like little dogs with flippers. They make great coats as well. I wouldn't eat them though – way too much cholesterol.

Martlet: Apparently, there's a real urgent concern with potato blight in PEI right now. Could end em' . What would you do with hundreds of acres of rotten patates?

Liar Liar: Feed them to the poor.

Martlet: Should Canada sell its water back to itself or what?

Liar Liar: Absolutely not. We should sell it to everyone else. Their the ones who seem to think it's so valuable. We have enough Coca Cola and cigarettes to keep us going for years.

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NDP candidate gears up in Oak Bay/Gordon Head

by Ben Isitt

Charley Beresford is ignoring predictions of impending doom and mounting a campaign to win the upcoming election as the NDP candidate in the riding of Oak Bay/Gordon Head.

While a recent poll commissioned by the *Times Colonist*, BCTV and other Canwest media properties pegged support for the governing party at 20 per cent, Beresford thinks the election isn't decided, and is mounting a campaign based on her party's traditional social values.

"I think we are going to do way better than people are giving us credit for... especially when we move into the campaign and people look at their choices," Beresford said.

That was the message Beresford, a trustee on the Victoria school board, delivered to 75 party supporters at the opening of her campaign office on April 7.

While the writ has yet to be dropped, Premier Ujjal Dosanjh is expected to call the election within weeks. The NDP's mandate expires on June 28, and both the NDP and the opposition Liberals are in campaign mode.

"I think our chances are very strong," Beresford said.

In the 1996 election, when the NDP returned to power with fewer votes but more seats than Gordon Campbell's Liberals, Liberal candidate Ida Chong edged out former NDP finance minister Elizabeth Cull by 600 votes to win the seat for Oak Bay/Gordon Head.

Beresford thinks her party can reclaim the seat, which includes the UVic campus, and she draws from a strong family history in social-democratic politics. Her grandfather, Max Campbell, represented the Saskatchewan riding of Battleford in the House of Commons in the 40s and 50s as a member of the co-operative Commonwealth Federation (CCF), the predecessor of the NDP.

"Progressive values bridge generations," Beresford said.

She was born in Saskatchewan and studied at Malaspina University-College in Nanaimo, before moving to Victoria in 1991. Beresford has a background in community development and co-founded the Nanaimo chapter of Big Sisters, as well as the Women's Defence Fund and the Therapeutic Riding Association of B.C.

She was elected to the school board in 1996, and is currently on leave from a position at the Ministry of Finance.

"There are those who say you need the economy revved up to address quality of life issues, but these issues are actually engines for a stronger, sustainable economy," Beresford said.

She criticizes the Liberals' plan to deliver "very large tax cuts for those who need it the least," suggesting government should focus on "more important priorities" such as clean air and water, fair labour laws, access to healthcare and education, and greater equality.

Beresford accuses the Liberals of failing to articulate a clear agenda, and she points to recent policy reversals regarding the ministry of women's equality, the use of replacement workers and the privatization of BC Hydro as evidence that quality of life issues may be threatened under a Liberal government.

"Once we get into the campaign the issues are clear, and Gordon Campbell becomes clearer in the public view," Beresford said.

She points to the NDP's record as the first jurisdiction in North America to protect 12 per cent of its landmass in parks, and the second jurisdiction to move toward a universal child-care system. She says taxes in B.C. are the third lowest in Canada, while unemployment is at its lowest in 20 years. Statistics Canada announced recently that B.C. led Canada in job growth in March 2001, accounting for 22,000 of the 30,000 jobs created nationally, while the unemployment rate in Victoria dropped to 5.6 per cent.

Beresford says people in her riding are "thoughtful, independent thinkers" that want strong representation in the legislature.

"We're certainly the underdogs here," Beresford said. "This is B.C. politics, and in this province it isn't over till its over."

Paddle down the longest river in the world

by Tim Harvey

"It's scary every time," says Colin Angus with a smile. Then with two quick strokes, he paddles his kayak off a 30-foot waterfall into Vancouver Island's Gordon River. He disappears briefly under white foam, then surfaces, steadies himself and pulls from his kayak a video camera to film his companions taking the same plunge.

It's the same camera that was stolen twice in Brazil when he and two friends made history as the first group to survive a 7,000 km rafting journey from the headwaters of the Amazon's longest tributary, Peru's Apumirac, to the Atlantic Ocean. It's the camera that captured footage, gunfire, extreme thirst and near-drowning in a raging river – with which UVic writing grad Remy Quiniter, a Vancouver filmmaker, crafted a documentary shown at UVic last week.

The UVic event aims to raise funds for Angus and Kozel's next river journey. They depart April 17 for the fifth-longest river in the world, the Yenisey, which flows from highland Mongolia through Siberia. The Yenisey is the longest river in the world which hasn't been paddled from source to sea, but unlike the Apurimac-Amazon route, people haven't died trying. Equipped with a raft and two kayaks and joined by Quinter and Maria Mironofskaya, a Russian-Canadian woman, they will paddle 6,500 kilometres over about five months to reach the Arctic Ocean at 72 degrees north latitude.

According to Angus, "The goal is not to scare ourselves, but to explore an area by a unique mode of transport. We really look forward to seeing traditional indigenous life and the reindeer grazing on lichens."

That said, the crew will focus on navigating rapids "for about three weeks," said Angus. "And there's no information about this river for paddlers, so we don't know what class the rapids are."

The team has consulted topographical maps, which indicate the river isn't quite as steep as the Apurimac, much of which they ran blind. In one of its roughest sections, the river destroyed their maps (and all their cooking gear). For three weeks every bend brought unknown risks, rapids reaching class six, above the limits of human navigability. They portaged when they could, but "the canyon walls were so steep, a lot of the time we just had to commit to the rapids," said Angus. "We went through some sections that, looking back, boggled our mind."

Angus is excited to have two kayaks on the trip, courtesy of Canada's Riot Kayaks, which allow a greater sense of freedom than a raft. But while Angus is a seasoned kayaker, Kozel is new to the sport. He recently learned to eskimo roll in UVic's MacKinnon Pool, but will have few chances to kayak local rivers before departing April 17. "I'll spend more time in the raft in rough sections of the [Yenisey]," said Kozel. "Getting in the kayak will be trial by fire."

Trial by gunfire tested Kozel's nerves on the Amazon. When guerrilla bullets whizzed by his head, he just rowed faster, while his partners jumped in the river behind their inflatable raft – "not an effective defense," Kozel recalls. He enjoys traveling with Angus, who brings out the best in him, and is always able to worm his way out, when he finds himself in a difficult situation.

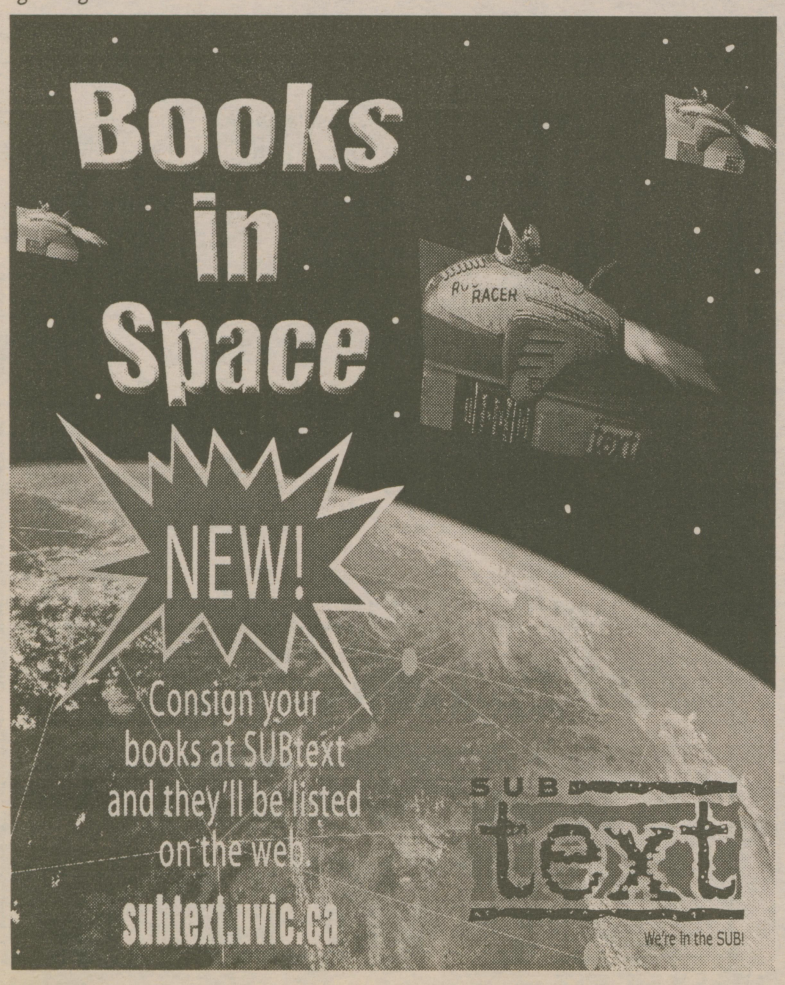
"It's got nothing to do with how much experience you've got, it's how badly you want to do it," says Angus. He learned to raft as a trainee guide near Banff only months before heading to South America. Ten years ago, at the age of 19, he sailed a 25-foot sailboat to French Polynesia via Mexico with Dan Audete, a friend from high school in the Comox Valley who now studies commerce at UVic. Neither had sailed offshore before and within days of departure faced storm-force winds.

Raised by a single mom, Angus washed dishes and planted trees to finance dreams of sailing. Like inexperience, he sees being broke as a challenge to overcome, and in his words, "challenge is what it's all about." The Yenisey expedition is his most streamlined exploit yet: media attention after the Amazon turned into book deals and sponsorships for a raft, kayaks and a satellite cell phone.

With Quinter on the trip the crew will also have a film-maker's savvy to employ, and they have set their sights on the Banff Festival of Mountain Films. Angus is honing his film-editing skills, but feels "the most important thing is coming out with the right footage." Thursday's screening of Quinter's work will demonstrate the joy and pain he invests in that footage.

Today on the Gordon River, it's more experience than footage Angus is after. He's the first to charge a set of rapids, bouncing rodeo-style over standing waves and sliding over rocks (just for the extra challenge). He's still grinning when he waits in an eddy for his friends, and hoists his paddle into the air. It's broken off at the base of one blade. He smiles like he's been up a creek with a broken paddle before.

"Lucky me," he says. "It'll be good for my uneven paddling skills." He then paddles unevenly – but confidently – into the biggest rapids he can find.



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Will local livestock fall prey to foot-and-mouth?

photo by Richard Warrington

by Glenn Wigmore

Many people believe that the foot-and-mouth disease wreaking havoc in the UK and other parts of Europe are just that: UK and Europe's problems.

But the reality is that their problems could easily become ours.

"It's a high risk to animals in North America," says veterinarian Dr. Geoffrey Gaunt. "The Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) will have to keep a high level of vigor to keep the disease out."

Foot-and-mouth disease has swept through farms and flatlands in Britain and has made its way to China and Japan and also into Western Europe. Farmers are being forced to slaughter countless herds of animals in order to prevent the disease from spreading. Vaccination for unaffected animals can be effective, but the only way to prevent its spread in infected animals is to kill them.

The virus only affects cloven-hooved animals such as cattle, pigs, sheep, goats and deer. Early signs for pigs and cattle are abnormally high temperatures and lethargic behaviour. In later stages, large vesicles begin to appear on the animal's lips, snout or feet. Eventually, the vesicles rupture and cause major trauma to the animal. Some even die from it.

The reason the disease has spread so rapidly is because of its highly contagious nature. It can be transmitted from place-to-place on a garment of clothing or a piece of dirt clinging to someone's shoe. When an outbreak of the disease swept the Isle of Wight in 1981, it was believed the virus had blown through the air, across the English Channel from France.

"If it does make it into Canada, it will probably be inadvertent or unintentional," says Gaunt. "It would likely arrive on a piece of luggage or on some contraband food."

While mad-cow disease, another contagion affecting Europe, can have an effect on a human beings, foot-and-mouth harbours no such danger. Still, foot-and-mouth can be transferred on a person's body or a piece of clothing. This has led some farmers in Britain to barricade themselves inside their residence, as they fear they will spread the disease further.

"It would take a great deal of our animals if it got here," said local farmer Eldon Findlay. "And with it being a challenge to build up a healthy herd in the first place, its impact would be disastrous."

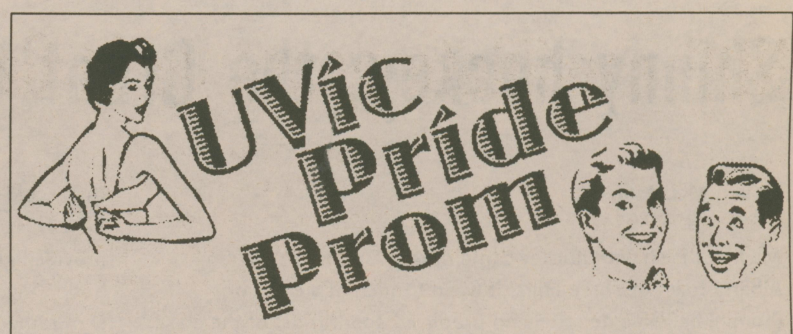
Findlay, who owns a farm at the Stelly's crossroads in Saanichton, is definitely wary of the threat foot-and-mouth presents. Hanging at the entrance to his farm is a sign that alerts visitors to stay away from the premises if they have visited the UK or Europe in the last month.

This is not the first time there has been a danger of foot-and-mouth disease in Canada. In 1952, the disease took root in Saskatchewan and caused the cattle prices to crash and all Canadian livestock had to be quarantined. It was a very difficult time for Canadian farmers.

Today, the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) is trying to crack down on all possible food items that travellers may bring into the country.

But this depends on the honour system, CFIA spokesperson Mez Oliveira told the CBC.

"To a large degree, we depend on the honesty of the traveller, the Canadian public at large, to tell us what they have."



Pulling the prom inside out

by Kevin Groves

Are you thinking that your high school prom might be a bit of a drag this year? Well, the UVic Pride Collective might have the solution to your problems.

UVic Pride will be hosting its second annual Pride Prom April 20 at a location yet to be decided. Ticket locations for the upcoming event can be found from the Pride Collective office.

Dan Kerr, office coordinator with the Pride Collective who is helping to organize the event, says that it will be "all ages," and though the event is targeted for youths, particularly UVic students and high schoolers, no one will be excluded "based on their age."

When asked why UVic Pride is hosting an annual prom, he points to the Pride Collective's focus on advocacy and support for UVic queers, as well as those who have not yet made the transition to university life.

"A student looking at attending their high school prom, for instance, may feel that they can't bring a same sex date to the event because of peer pressure. We'd like to provide these individuals with a more supportive alternative."

Last year, UVic Pride hosted the first Pride Prom in the Fernwood Community Centre. According to Kerr it drew in about 80 people and was quite successful.

"Lots of people approached the Pride office after the prom last year and told us they had a great time. From the amount of positive feedback we received, I'd say it was a success."

The event should feature the talents of local Victoria djs, as well as a drag show and door prizes.

"I'm looking forward to going," says Kerr, "and it should be a very exciting event."

To find out more about the Pride Prom contact the Pride Collective's Office at 472-4393, or email them at pride@uvss.uvic.ca

Celluloid captures fire on the hassle lines

continued from page 6

to Boyce, it was instigated a vigilante group of pro-loggers "who want to make sure nothing goes wrong for them."

He captured the event on film, but since it was dark at 5:30, very little is visible – only the sounds of screams, swearing and accusations are clear.

Carsen was locked to a 45-gallon cement-filled barrel at the time of the attack. Her screams are clearly audible on the recording. The loggers "intention was to throw the barrels over the edge of the blockaded road – they didn't realize she was locked up in a way that made it impossible to unlock herself while struggling.

"I have to say I probably saved her life because the loggers were under the assumption that she could remove her arm at any time. But she was locked into this barrel and she couldn't have freedom of movement because she had four men pulling her body and six men pulling the barrel and throwing it off the cliff," explains Boyce. He told the attackers he knew who they were, they were committing a criminal act and he was filming their actions. They left Carsen and focussed the attack on Boyce.

The tape didn't provide enough evidence to warrant charges. But the group laid civil charges and Timberwest counter-sued for nine million dollars in lost revenue. By the end of last year Boyce officially signed-off the law suit.

At this point in recollecting the details of the Walbran Valley blockade, Boyce pauses then chants some Bob Marley: "Get up, stand up. Stand up for your rights."

"This logging area is crown land and it's under the forestry practices code as a natural disturbance type 1, which means it's supposed to be specially managed because it's highly sensitive and they were just clear cutting," explains Boyce.

He has used film to impart socially relevant messages since childhood. In 1979, at 11-years-old, he became part of a Shaw Cable-sponsored outreach program called *Exploring Television with Children* (ETC). Its purpose was to deal with social issues and interpret them so children could understand the world they lived in.

"We made films on things like the Vietnamese boat kids arriving here, people with disabilities entering the school system, the children's hospital in Vancouver and the new constitution," says Boyce. By the time he'd finished the program in 1985, Boyce had hosted, operated the camera and directed two *ETC* episodes.

"Kids would get a bit more of a perspective on something that normally adults wouldn't bother explaining to them. I hope it helped," says Boyce. In fact it helped the kids participating in *ETC*, too. There's a core of about 10 kids who stuck with it and went on in the industry, he adds. At first the programs were run on their local Shaw channel, but some episodes were bought and aired by the Knowledge Network.

At 33, Boyce still lives at home. His parents have an acre of land on which he's built a two-room cabin of scavenged materials. Under his bed lie scraps of oak tiles that will become a proper floor someday. He sacrificed a water heater to purchase digital imaging technology. He's not alone, though. Keeping him warm at night is his Lab/Rottweiler cross, Cimbri, named after a character from Dungeons and Dragons Boyce played when he was young.

Plans are underway for collaboration with the Western Canada Wilderness Committee. It will be an educational film about the Walbran Valley that will "show how the upper valley has to be saved for the lower valley to survive," he says.

In March, Boyce came to Victoria to film another project. This time he won't be saving the Walbran, he'll be filming a cd release concert for Victoria-based heavy metal thrash band Explosive Rage Disorder. There are always bills to pay.

CFUV
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Playlist for Mar. 31st-April 7th
compiled by lindsay cooper, music director
Artist Title Label
1. The Metic* S/T Self Released
2. Atlas Strategic* Raputure Ye... Global Symphonic
3. Daft Punk Discovery EMI
4. The Be Good Tanyas* Blue Horse Porch
5. Nobukazu Takemura HoshiNo Koe Thrill Jockey
6. Tortoise Standards Thrill Jockey
7. Freeworm* Vegetation = Fuel Hydrophonik
8. Boards of Canada In A Beautiful Place Warp
9. Dzihan & Kamien Refreaked Couch
10. Tipsy U Oh! Asphodel
ranking reflects airplay
* denotes a Canadian artist

Shinny hockey: the Great White North's sporting grassroots

by Iain McLetchie

My first brush with hockey came during Grade 1 in the small Alberta town of Three Hills. It wasn't much of a collision, though, as I was definitely no prodigy. I spent most of the class sliding on my knees between the blue lines. Several times I managed to get up and skate on my ankles to the hash-marks where, once again, I fell down and crawled on all fours to the goal-line. The N.H.L. was the furthest thing from my mind at the time.

By grade 2, however, hockey had me in its firm grasp. In small-town Alberta, hockey was all there was in winter for elementary age kids. With that knowledge, and for the princely sum of $40 each, my brother and I starting playing Tiny Mite hockey. We would get to the rink at 6:30 on Tuesday and Friday mornings, playing with our school clothes underneath our uniforms. Yellowed armpits soon became the proud signs of a hockey player.

For a bit, before my first pair of Cooperalls (red, to match my Jofa helmet), I would wear shinpads underneath my school pants and often went to school in that way, reasoning that wearing them would protect my legs from frozen soccer balls during impromptu recess soccer matches.

We were all eager to play, and as soon as any of us could raise the puck off the ice a new paradigm was created. In those days we would come home from school and run straight to the outdoor rinks in order to catch a bit of shinny before suppertime. I'm sure all of the older guys on the ice were sick of us little guys nipping at their heels, raising the puck and constantly falling down right in their path.

Most nights I would completely lose track of time and wander home by 8:00, to be met by the icy stare of my mom who would send me straight to my room. Despite the constant threat of grounding the next day she would let me go back to the rink, undoubtedly certain that, once again, I would miss supper.

For some strange reason, my brother decided that being a goalie was his calling in life. This was fine by me, as our shared downstairs bedroom was large enough to accommodate a net, and high enough to allow for full slapshots. Thus we passed many cold Alberta nights, Andy in goal as Mike Liut and me as Kent Nilsson. My parents, god bless them, were kind enough to provide light bulbs for the ones I kept shattering on my backswing, although they did encourage me to work on my wrist shot rather than the slapper.

Andy developed into a fine stand-up goaltender that played the angles, rather than relying on reflexes. I, on the other hand, was a slightly combustible rushing defenceman, a la Paul Coffey. Many were the times that I took off on glorious end-to-end rushes, and also many were the times when I coughed the puck up in front of my own net, resulting not only in a goal for the opposition, but also in the anger of my twin brother.

My dad took to calling me "dipsey-doodle" and particularly enjoyed singing "Dipsey-doodle coughed the puck, coughed the puck, coughed the puck" (to the tune of "Yankee Doodle") whenever I managed the afore-mentioned guffaw.

We progressed nicely, and by Grade 6 were invited to play with the junior high lads. At this stage, I became acutely aware of a phenomenon known as "hitting puberty". The combination of me not having achieved this momentous stage of my life, unlike all the other players proved, along with the new-fangled notion of "full contact", to be extremely disturbing. I dreaded stepping onto the ice as I was sure to be run over by a maraudering, acne-possessed malevolent in due course.

I'm pretty sure the other players were placing bets on who could hit me the hardest, and I have no doubt that the numbers were in the high teens. Eventually I learned to defend myself, but slashing and tripping inevitably resulted in trips to the penalty box where my dad stood by, more than eager to chastise me for my sins.

Throughout the junior high years, hockey began to take a back seat to other sports. My brother and I both started to play volleyball and basketball. Andy was slowly becoming disillusioned with playing in net. He felt like nothing more than a target, and grew more than a little angry with guys ripping slapshots at him when he wasn't ready. I still enjoyed the sport, but was already starting to realize that I wasn't going to make it anywhere in hockey. It didn't take long before visions of glory and one day dunking a basketball took over my sporting dreams.

So hockey was something of which I lost track, except for the odd games of shinny over Christmas, when the roles were reversed and I would stand in net cursing at all the youngsters raising the puck in my general direction. (Let's just say that playing shinny with a bunch of 12 and 13-year-old kids will make any human being appreciate the brilliant and patient work being done by teachers in our schools.)

And therein lies my biggest problem with Victoria. To me, winter is hockey and hockey is shinny, but the Garden City has no ice in winter. Now, before you all tell me I'm insane for complaining about the weather out here, let me explain. I love Victoria. I love the ocean, the mountains, the sun and the warm winters. I even love the tourists. I just wish somehow we could play outdoor shinny in the middle of the winter season.

Why, you ask? Because anyone who hasn't played outdoors at night under the lights is missing out. If you haven't seen your shot bounce off the crossbar and out of the rink, resulting a gingerly walk 40 feet on a snowy field in order to find it, you're missing out. If you've never played kings with someone, you're missing out. (It's kind of like rink-long curling with two pucks. The first player to hit the other player's puck wins.) And if you haven't been left all alone on net during a shinny match, you've missed out. Hey, you can raise the puck when there is no goalie.

Of course, there are downsides to outdoor rinks. For one, the ice isn't overly smooth, meaning that trying to deflect pucks isn't a good call as at anytime that black circular object can redirect straight into one's genitals. Did I mention that little kids never listen to older guys? Playing in net is a little like being an archery target.

Alas, it appears global warming won't fix my problem, so until some demented scientist develops a particularly hardy form of ice that is resistant to rain and warmth, my dreams of late-night outdoor shinny in Victoria won't come to fruition. Ah well. Maybe a move to Yellowknife will be in order, so I can take advantage of their particularly good outdoor rink conditions. Then again, maybe not.

Lacrosse: a stolen sport meets its makers

by Jessica Perry

WINNIPEG (CUP) – Lacrosse, now the sport of Ivy League yuppies everywhere, holds an interesting place in Canadian history. In many ways, lacrosse's development and acculturation into its current manifestation have been reflective of the colonization of North America.

Originally, lacrosse was played by First Nations people, and several areas had a variation of the game. The three prominent versions – distinguished by equipment, type of goal and stickhandling techniques, as well as ceremonial differences – were the Southeastern, Great Lakes and Iroquoian.

Lacrosse was widely used as training for battle or settling disputes. The Iroquoian name reflected the fact that lacrosse was often a surrogate for war. The name, guhcheegwuhai, means "Little Brother of War."

Lacrosse, said to be a gift from the Creator, was also a spiritual exercise. When lacrosse was played, it was with the understanding that the game was a gift and worthy of great respect.

Just as the Canadian government sought to "civilize" First Nations people, so too did Europeans "civilize" lacrosse.

Lacrosse was adapted for European aristocratic athletes by a Canadian named W. George Beers, who set out to standardize the sport. In 1867, he established field dimensions, put limits on the numbers of players per team and developed other rules. In fact, Beers is largely credited with pioneering lacrosse, even though it was developed by native people.

"The National Lacrosse Association was formed in 1867," said Bruce Miller of the Aboriginal Access Program. "Essentially, 13 years later is when they decided to bar Aboriginal participants based on the fact they received payment or subsidy to attend lacrosse matches both nationally and internationally."

Because of economic difficulties that many First Nations faced, they were frequently unable to cover expenses without outside assistance.

This assistance came in different forms. First Nations people were often paid by promoters to play against non-Aboriginal teams. This is because matches between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal teams tended to draw a large crowd. Furthermore, because the Canadian government has a fiduciary responsibility to First Nations, the teams would occasionally receive funds to travel to games.

Because the Aboriginal teams received money from outside sources, the NLA labeled the teams professional and they were barred from competition at the national and international levels, which required an amateur status. Players from non-Aboriginal teams were overwhelmingly affluent and could, in this regard, pay their own expenses.

It came to be that only Aboriginal teams were designated as professional. First Nations were ultimately excluded from the world championships and other amateur competitions.

This is a trend that was only recently reversed, when the Iroquois Nationals, a team consisting of First Nations players, formed in 1984. It was not until 1989 that the Iroquois Nationals were recognized by the International Lacrosse Federation. A year later, in 1990, the team played its first tournament, ending over 100 years of exclusion of First Nations teams from competition.

(Note: Victoria is home to one of the finest professional Lacrosse teams in the Canada and world: the Shamrocks. The team plays during the spring and summer at Memorial Arena. The season starts in May.)

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Yo-yo tricks and the secret to surviving Kelowna

by Kevin Groves

If you're a fan of *the Simpsons* like me then you might remember a certain episode way back in the mists of time when Bart and his little cronies started a yo-yo frenzy at Springfield Elementary.

Late one night, when only alcoholics and fourth year history students creep about, I took a break from frantically writing my essay to watch that episode on Teletoon. Bart slung the wood like a real pro, and did what he did best: caused chaos like any true hell-raiser. Rock-on brother.

My brothers, Mike and Richard, and I had been yo-yo fanatics since the early days of high school. Like any social constructionist this was a response to our environment. Kelowna is a fun place to visit if you're passing through on the way to anywhere else, but it is absolutely devoid of stimulating things to do, unless you enjoy driving really fast through the mall parking lot on a Saturday night and then pulling the emergency brake (which I'll admit can be somewhat entertaining, until your car flips over).

Sitting around in the living room, our hands slick from the Nintendo controller, we'd take up our yo-yo's and try to outdo each other with our repertoires. In martial arts the goal is simply to improve and this Zen attitude can be applied to yo-yoing, all it takes is a clear mind and a supple wrist, requirements easily applicable for me since dating is still a completely foreign concept at this time.

Mike would try to do a sleeper. He'd throw really hard four or five times, muscles bunched and brow furrowed, with no effect. We'd complain about the quality of the string, and make accusations about yo-yo's being defective, and then he'd throw again with a relaxed motion. This time the wood complied, spinning on the end of the string like it was meant to be there. I do not yo, it yo's all by itself.

Richard of course, being the most stylistically inclined of the three of us, is well on his way to founding his own yo-yo school for the gifted, and is already making his first string picture. We watched him rock the baby, turned green with jealousy, and pictured him in successive stages of hurt. Show off.

Once I tried to throw out from my body, and doing it too hard of course, the string broke. Suddenly, the wood took off like Superman on a good day, and we felt a small thump as it broke the sound barrier, or was that the kitchen window? The three of us looked at each other and ran to the medicine cabinet to prepare for the slow headache that comes on after fifteen minutes of motherly yelling. Ah grasshopper, you need more training.

Yeah, those were good times, and I'm proud to say that at least one of us is still keeping the faith.

Recently, I've rediscovered the joy of slinging a yo-yo after a prolonged absence, and ever since I've carried it around faithfully to be used at a moment's notice. It has never grown old, though that might be because my new yo-yo will light up if I spin it hard enough.

You might ask why a young man quickly approaching the age when he becomes a mature student at UVic would choose to practice a skill so juvenile, but as anyone who's seen Roger Moore in Octopussy can attest, there's something to be said for refining yo-yo skills.

Lots of famous people have slung the wood at one time or another. When he was not butting heads with Tricky Brit Wellington, for instance, Napoleon was known to carry and use a yo-yo (probably for stress relief). I would assume that he was a left handed yo-yo player as every picture I have seen of him depicts his right hand deftly tucked inside of his jacket (to hold his pants up), leaving only his left hand free.

When it comes down to it, though, I don't care about the stigma of childishness: I welcome it. I have the rest of my life to sit in an office, put on my anal-retentive face and do corporate gymnastics. For now, I want to be a big kid. I still have my Lego at home, and on my wall there's a big picture of Eric Cartman screaming in all his big boned glory to respect my Authori-tah. Beefcake, Beekcake!

Maturity can wait, and one way to avoid it is to pick up my plastic yo-yo and make a public ass of myself.

Now if only I could find a way to make yo-yoing an Olympic sport.

photo by Richard Warrington

Kevin demonstrating the cool of yo-yos.

ON CAMPUS

UVic Medieval Club will be having their AGM on **May 7th**. For more information call 382-4868

Moving out at the end of term? Don't want to pack all your stuff with you? Drop off any items you no longer need or want at the UVic Waste Reduction and Recycling Office. Drop off: in front of the SUB on **April 28** from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Contact the UVic Waste Reduction and Recycling Office for more info: 721-0372 or recycle@uvvm.uvic.ca

CHAI Victoria – Jewish Students Association offers a full and varied schedule of programming. Feel free to check us out or to join us at our next event. For more details, please contact us at jewish@uvic.ca or at the INFO-LINE 370-9488, ext. 2.

New service! Two Jewish chaplains are now available on campus. Gidi Nahshon, MSW, is available on Mondays and Wednesdays 5-6 pm, while Joel Fagan, MD, is available on Tuesdays 4-5 pm. Drop by to discuss what's on your mind – not just spiritual matters. For more information, please contact 721-8338.

"Ring-Out" the week with Inter Varsity Christian Fellowship every Friday night! Everyone is welcome to join us for Praise, Worship, Singing, Prayer, Fellowship and Teaching! Have a Bible? Bring it! See you Friday nights for Ring-Out in Cle C 112 at 7:30 p.m.

OFF CAMPUS

The Moss Street Market is gearing up for another season of organic produce and herbs, organic baked goods, crafts and a variety of interesting creations. Drop by the first market of the year, **Sat. April 28** at 10 a.m. and see what the market has to offer this year. The market is located at Sir James Douglas School, Thurlow & Fairfield.

Free Trade Area of the Americas – trading away democracy and equality! Join us at a family-oriented rally against the Summit of the Americas in Quebec City. Rally against transnational corporate rule and in support of health, environment, education and labour. **Sat. April 21** from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Peace Arch State Park (Highway 99). For more info call 254-0703 or visit www.stopftaa.org/peacearch

TUTORS

English/Philosophy. Essay critique, proofreading, assignment discussion, etc. Enjoy learning but need a little assistance to fulfill your potential? I can help. Call Janet at 595-8438.

VOLUNTEERS

Victoria non-profit charitable organization in need of new volunteers for various duties. For more information, please call 382-7927 and speak to Shawn.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Tickets are now available for the 7th Annual Victoria YM-YWCA Women of Distinction Awards. This **May 10,** 77 nominees will be recognized in 12 categories. It's your opportunity to celebrate with a woman whose inspiration always leaves an impression on her community. Due to the popularity of the Awards Dinner, tickets are available on a first-come, first-serve basis. Tickets are $95 (including $45 charitable tax receipt) and may be purchased at the reception desk of the YM-YWCA, 880 Courtney St.

Pottery, sculpture & hand-building classes with continuous registration available. Six 2.5 hour classes, flexible, $160. Call Potter's Corner at 383-5446 for more details.

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Summer camp staff needed to work at a co-ed special needs camp serving children with ADD/LD in Pennsylvania, USA. We're looking for program staff and cabin counsellors; experience with special needs children's children essential. Excellent facilities, many Canadian staff, travel allowance of $350 (US), salary of $1500 (US), working VISA/medical insurance provided, as well as accommodation. For local interviews call Bob or Kyle at 381-8682.

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Oh **Eris**, my chaotic guide, let's make this a superlative summer, full of goodness and fun and giggles and joissance and all around discovery!

Thanks to the whole M-crew for a surprisingly rockin', violence-free (oops touch wood) year. You did good.

It has come to the attention of the Director of Services that the clubs listed below are no longer active.
If you are an active member of one of the clubs listed below, and insist that the club is still active and meets the requirements of the Students' Society Clubs Policy, then please notify the Director of services immediately at 721-8368 or services@uvss.uvic.ca Any clubs not spoken for will be deregistered after **May 15.**
Alpha Masta Beta, Anarchist Club, Animal Rights Club, Anti-Prohibition Club, Campus Crusade for Christ, Christian Science, Earth Festival, Eiktha, Film Society Club, Free the Spirit Club, Horseback Riding Club, Ind. Canadian Club, Rainbow Rock Club, Science Fiction Club, Students for Clayquot, Swing Club, Temperate Rainforest Club, Theatre Club, World Health Club, Progressive Conservative Club, Permaculture Club, Oxfam, Natural Law Club, Investors Club.

BILLBOARD RATES	
students & clubs	$2/issue
non-students	$2/line
businesses	$5.50/3 lines
hey you!	$1/issue

All advertisments on the billboards page must adhere to the following statement:
"Everyone is welcome. We oppose discrimination on the basis of race, gender, sexuality, class, age and ability."

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Looking for CHAN SISTERS?
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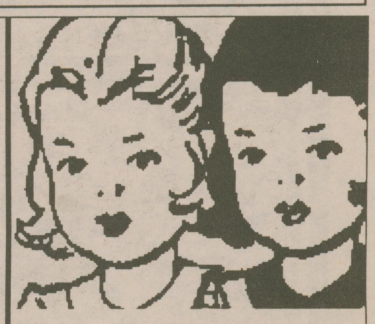
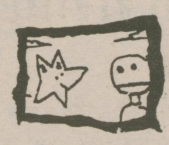
breads & baked goods
Available at the Moss Street Market, every Saturday on "Farmer's Row" or order by phone or email
orders: 384.2562
chansisters@hotmail.com



CHAN SISTERS

THE MARTLET

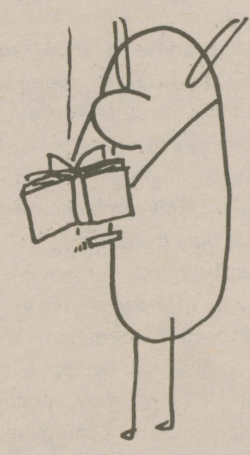
comics

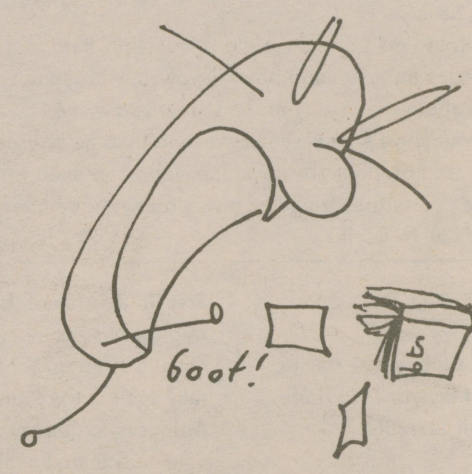


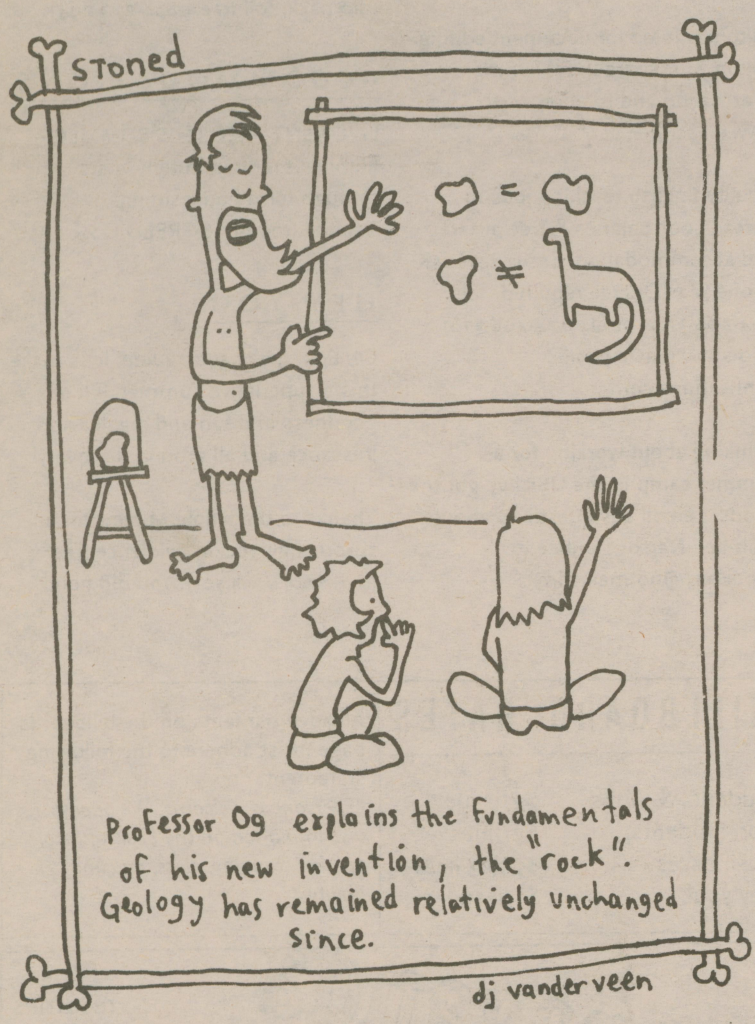
Holy God it looks like it was drawn by Charles Schulz or Gary Trudeau Larson for chrissakes. Why don't I learn how to write? Where did I get this letter?

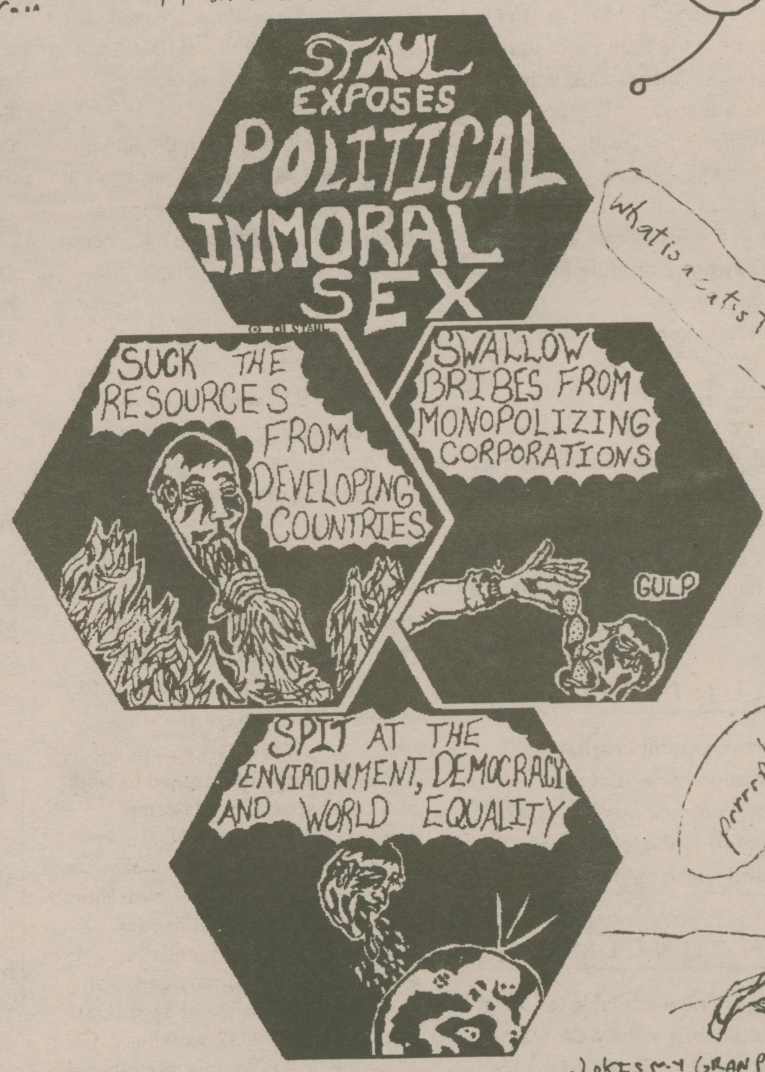
I Got this letter:
Dear Brian.
In your comics, you always seem to egomaniacally portray yourself as ultra-cool and better than everyone. Just once I'd like to see you look like a buffoon. Surely you're not perfect.
Love, Mom
Well okay. I do tend to point out the fallacies of the world around me. So today I'll take this opportunity to tell you about the retarded thing I did last week...
It all started when my Girlfriend's Cat, decided it would be fun to urinate on my boots (well, mostly on my boot laces
I'm untouchable!
COMICS FOR YOUR CHURCH
BY 'THE INFALLABLE' BRIAN FUKUSHIMA
So there, I do stupid things just like everyone else. (okay, maybe a little stupider)
And as a public service I'd like to warn everybody that boot laces can and will go all the way down the drain, so Be careful!
razzle frazzin..
So rather than buying a new pair of laces, I decided to wash the soiled ones in the bathroom sink (After all they were like-new)
I let them soak for a bit and when I returned, I unplugged the sink before taking the laces out. There they went, right down the drain!
WWW.KENTROMIC.COM

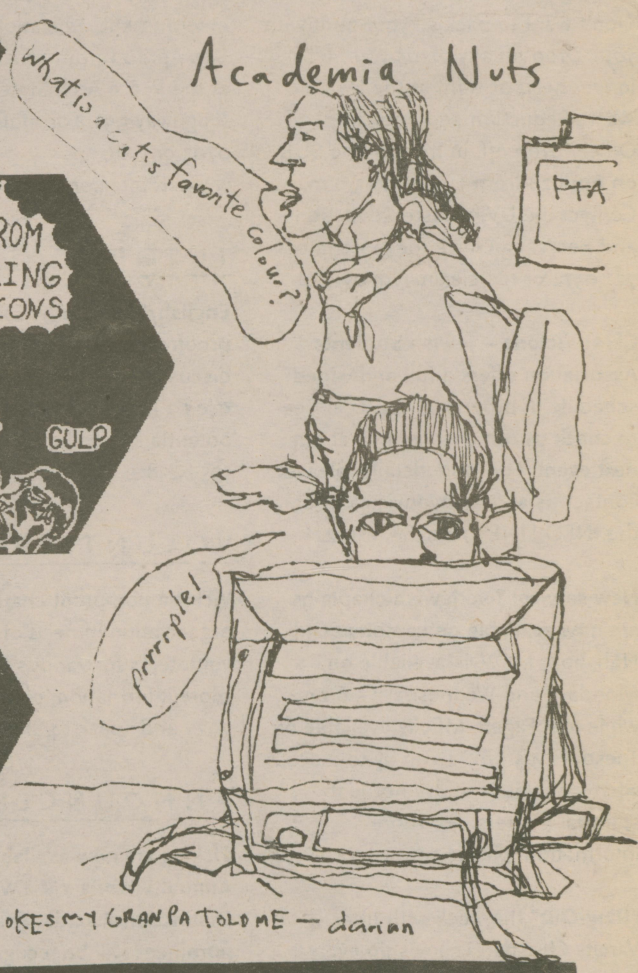
Goombas






stoned
=
≠
Professor Og explains the fundamentals of his new invention, the "rock". Geology has remained relatively unchanged since.
dj vanderveen


STAUL EXPOSES
POLITICAL IMMORAL SEX
SUCK THE RESOURCES FROM DEVELOPING COUNTRIES
SWALLOW BRIBES FROM MONOPOLIZING CORPORATIONS
GULP
SPIT AT THE ENVIRONMENT, DEMOCRACY AND WORLD EQUALITY



JOKES MY GRANPA TOLD ME — darian

CONTINUED....
The Appendages Liberate Themselves
....We'll leave him be... Now for something completely different.... that crazy foursome we all know and love...
THE WACKY MISADVENTURES OF THE...
ARMS & LEGS
IN... "ABOUT TOWN!"
Look what just walked out of the Ice Cream Store, Mouse! ...Opportunity...
Hey Fellas... My name's Ronald McCrackhead and this here's Moonshine Mouse
How would you boys like to join the Capitalist workforce? We could always use a couple good hands and feet
Yes... Support our... system
Well, then it's settled... the two arms are mine...
What? NO HOW!
You got the last shipment of stray, innocent upper limbs!
Don't mess with me Mouse!
C'mon, I'll cut you up, Fryboy!
The appendages decide that it's best if they return to their owner...
On the way back...
Some say love just comes to you, others say love must be pursued...
RIP!
What the...
BLISS...
Hey there, sugar!
Drop Dead, Asshole